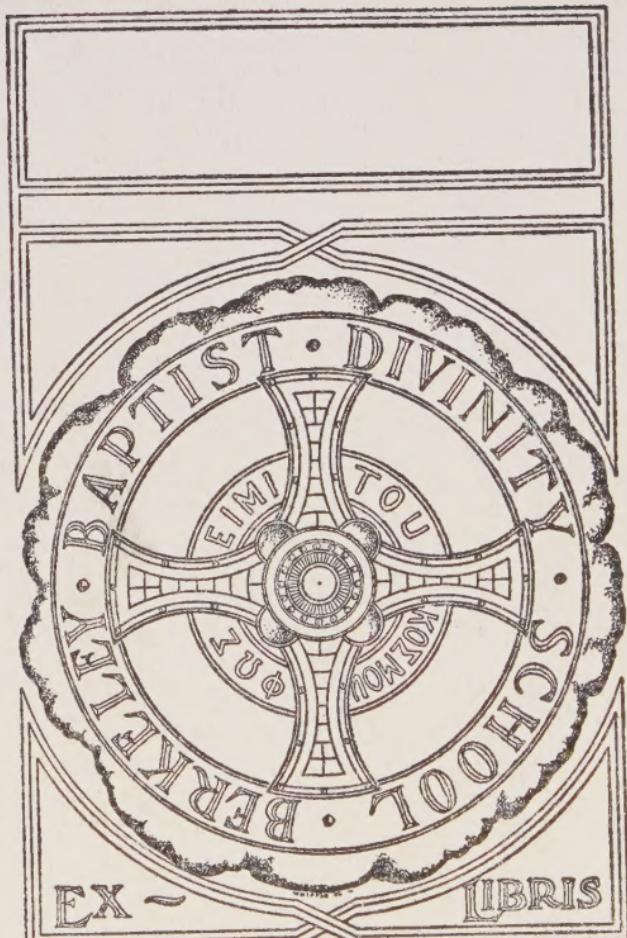


THE  
HERITAGE  
OF YOUTH

DAVID WATSON

BAPTIST  
SCHOOL

BERV.  
DIV.



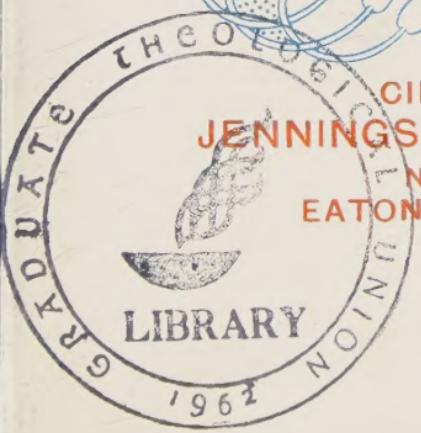
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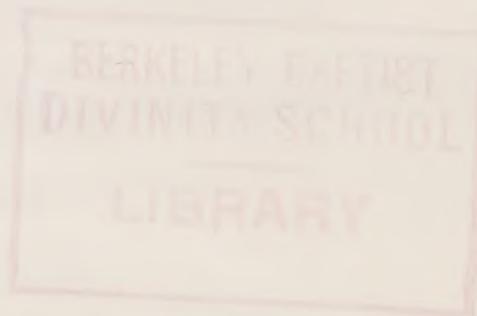
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To

MY ALMA MATER

THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW



## PREFACE

THE kindly reception given by the press and the public to *In Life's School* has encouraged the author to issue the present volume. He trusts it will be found to contain a timely and helpful message to young men.

Its theme is the grand heritage of youth—how that heritage is often thoughtlessly and sinfully squandered—and how it may be guarded and enriched. Due allowance is made for heredity and environment, but the responsibility of life is insisted on, and stress is laid on the *personal equation*, the importance of which is being more and more recognised by the best thought of our time.

D. W.

GLASGOW, 1903.



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“A heritage, it seems to me,  
A king might wish to hold in fee.”

J. RUSSELL LOWELL.



## A GOODLY HERITAGE

A

“ He wears the rose  
Of youth upon him.”

SHAKESPEARE.

---

“ To be young is to be as one of the immortals.”

HAZLITT.

## CHAPTER I

### A GOODLY HERITAGE

A YOUNG man beginning life in this year of grace enters upon a truly magnificent inheritance. I might speak of what he shares with others, with men and women of all ages, our Christian civilisation, and all it implies.

Kinglake, in his ever delightful *Eothen*, may banteringly write from his campaigner's tent that it is sweet to find oneself free from the stale civilisation of Europe, and Huxley in a bilinguisly pessimistic mood may pray for a friendly comet to sweep the whole affair into destruction, but these great names notwithstanding, there is much to admire and something to praise in our modern civilisation. We are not blind to the defects, but we believe they are temporary and inevitable and will be shed in time. Civilisation, like humanity itself, is in process of evolution. Not in a month or a year does the ape or tiger die. We are climbing an endless ladder, and the rung

which we grasp with our hands to-day will be under our feet to-morrow. And this ladder of progress rises, be it noted, in the form of a *spiral*, so that when we seem to have returned to the same point and retrograded, we are in reality higher up—on a higher plane. Our growing sensitivity to, and impatience of, defects in the social organism, is the strongest proof we could have of real progress.

Our Christian civilisation, then, and all that it implies, civil and religious liberty, just laws, pure administration, inventions and discoveries, education, the achievements of science, the treasures of literature and art, new social aims, ideals, and enthusiasms, all these the young man shares with others, but I wish to confine myself at present to what is peculiarly youth's own.

Many young men never realise their heritage until it is too late. They enter upon life insufficiently warned, they go through it with shut eyes, and only when life is far spent do they awake to the grand opportunities which they have missed for ever. The golden days of youth have flown idly by, and have not been made to stand and deliver their priceless treasure trove of wisdom and experience. If youth only knew, if age only could, how different it might be !

First of all let us note that *youth itself is a*

*glorious heritage*, the mere fact of being young. So long as it remains a "joy to be alive," so long will it be true that "to be young is very heaven." For youth means strength, vitality, overflowing energy, fulness of life. Youth means enthusiasm, imagination, vision, freshness of outlook, aspiration. Youth means romance. It is the time of vague longings, vast dim anticipations and foreshadowings, music without words, pictures that glow and fade before they have been grasped, ecstasy shot through with pain. It is then we hear the voice of strange command :

"Calling us still as friend calls friend,  
With love that cannot brook delay,  
To rise and follow the ways that wend  
Over the hills and far away."

Youth means enterprise, power of initiative, ardour for new ways. Youth is ever ready to make the venture of faith, and will dare anything, and succeed by greatly daring. The enthusiasm of youth is the fire which burns without consuming. It is the want of enthusiasm which consumes, withers, ages a man.

Further, youth means *hope*. Hope springs eternal in the heart of youth. While old age looks forth pensively through western windows towards the setting sun, youth ever gazes

through eastern windows towards the sunrise, or through "charm'd magic casements opening on the foam" of sunlit seas. Hope sings in the young man's heart like a linnet in a cage, and heavy indeed is the disappointment that can quench that song. It furnishes the marching music of the young man's life. It inspires and incites to noble deeds. It sends him forth in search of El Dorado. Whatever may be true of others, of the young man it is indisputably and everlastinglly true that he lives by hope, and if you could reach and destroy that hope to which he clings, he would find himself gazing forth upon black despair. Hope and youth are synonymous. Sanguine, confident, optimistic—that is youth, saying with Browning :

"I go to prove my soul !  
I see my way as birds their trackless way.  
I shall arrive ! What time, what circuit first,  
I ask not : but, unless God send His hail  
Or blinding fireballs, sleet or stifling snow,  
In some time, His good time, I shall arrive."

Again, youth means *love*. It is in youth that love takes up the harp of life and smites its sounding chords. Then self is eclipsed. Then the earth is not grey, but rosy. Then the future is a golden vista, rainbow-hued and flower-strewn, opening into infinitude.

Perhaps this is why, on looking back upon our youth, it seems so haloed with glory, because it meant for us the dawning of love.

The most valuable part of our inheritance is often what no eye can measure or weigh. A tender friendship, a fond memory, or a sense of beauty which finds exquisite delight in a sunrise at sea, or a garden of roses, these are the things, as Maeterlinck has pointed out, which bring us life's purest joys, and build up what is best and happiest in us.

"The more we emerge from the animal, and approach what seems the surest ideal of our race, the more evident does it become that these things, trifling as they well may appear by the side of nature's stupendous laws, do yet constitute our sole inheritance; and that, happen what may to the end of time, they are the hearth, the centre of light to which mankind will draw ever more and more closely." \*

I would not say our sole inheritance, but a goodly part of it. Our Belgian mystic with all his power has his limitations. There are pages in the work just quoted which make dismal reading. He is blind on what should be his God-ward side. He has no upward look. He finds life around him and at his

\* *The Buried Temple.*

feet wondrously divine, he bends in reverence and mystic rapture before its unfathomable mysteries, but for him there is no God, no Divine Providence, no Heavenly Father. An atheist mystic! Surely never before in the world's history has such a portent been seen. And surely we shall yet receive from this courageous thinker a larger and more positive message.

Youth means *joy*. Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth. This joy is the result of the things I have enumerated—strength, enthusiasm, vision, initiative, hope, and love. It is not the joy of harvest, of reaping, of autumn ripe and rich, but the joy of sowing, of spring with its sweet promise, the joy of setting out, the joy of effort, and of bright anticipation of success.

Youth means *faith*, faith in God and men and the triumph of Good, faith in itself and its own destiny. Yet it is in youth that faith is often most rudely shaken. Restlessness, always a feature of youth, leads to revolt and war against traditional beliefs and against society as presently organised. In our heritage of beliefs there are many illusions, and these are sacrificed as we advance.

Progress involves sacrifice. Growth means loss as well as gain. Every illusion dethroned

and destroyed marks a step forward and upward. Yet the process is painful, and we feel bereft and impoverished as one by one the illusions go which were once the dearest and truest of truths to us. And sometimes truth shares the fate of illusion. Everything goes. Then the soul's outlook is dark indeed, and the peril is great. An experience like this can only be lived through victoriously by the man of invincible sincerity and unflinching moral courage. The crisis will pass, and he will regain his lost beliefs in another form. Even the old illusions will return transfigured. After the storm there will be calm, after the conflict peace. Scars may remain, but the strength gained in the conflict will also remain, and the truths thus hardly won will be held henceforth with all the energy of the soul.

Further, the heritage of youth is a heritage of an *accumulated experience*. We can never over-estimate our debt to the past. We are the heirs of all the ages.

“We see by the light of thousands of years,  
And the knowledge of millions of men.”

To-day is like a vast reservoir into which all the generations have been pouring their golden streams, and from that gathered reservoir of experience, wisdom, and knowledge, we draw daily supplies for the con-

duct of life. The wise man is simply the man who profits by the experience of others ; the ordinary man profits only by his own sharp experience ; while the hopeless fool profits neither by his own nor others' experience. Were experience not treasured up for us in some way, there could be no such thing as progress. But what is literature but experience ? What is a genuine book but a man's life, a record of a man's experience ? I trust you may be able amidst all your work and the manifold engagements of our complex modern life to preserve a margin for general reading ; reading for the pure pleasure and joy of reading. We have a glorious literature, but many a man is like the owner of some great mansion who lives ignobly in the kitchen, and never enters the drawing-room, or the library, or the picture gallery. Only by wide and varied reading can we gather the experience that is treasured in literature.

Lastly, in these days the heritage of youth is a heritage of enlarged and *enlarging opportunities*, opportunities of self-enrichment in the truest sense, self-realisation, self-evolution. We find imperialism in every sphere. Man's outlook on life is larger to-day than ever it was. Doors are opening everywhere, and avenues to fame and fortune and service hitherto undreamt of. They greatly err who

say that young men have fewer opportunities of getting on in these days than their fathers had. Croakers and grumblers have said that in every age. Free education may have brought us within a measurable distance of equality of opportunity for all the children of the state, but the result has simply been to raise the general standard of efficiency. Equality of opportunity by no means guarantees equality of efficiency. Success is still to be won in business and in all the professions by the earnest, energetic, efficient man.

Such, then, my young brother, is your heritage, briefly and swiftly outlined, and the question now arises: What are you going to make of this grand inheritance?

You may do one of two things with it.

*First*, You may neglect it, waste it, squander it. Many a fine inheritance have I seen wasted by sloth and idleness, by weakness, and by wickedness. You may sell your birthright, like Esau, for a momentary gratification. Mr Coulson Kernahan has shown us, as only a profound spiritual teacher and a supreme literary artist can, the insidious inroads that any vice, drink, sensuality, or deceit, gradually but surely makes on the most refined natures, and the utter and awful ruin that ensues. I do not know anything more searching in their keen analysis than

*A Dead Man's Diary* and *A Book of Strange Sins*. Be very sure of this, that a man's worst foe is himself. No one but yourself can rob you of your heritage. Self-mastery is the secret of success. He who masters himself, masters his fate. But the heritage of youth once sinfully squandered, is squandered for ever.

We know how Alfred the Great, with unparalleled heroism, won back his kingdom of Wessex from the savage Norsemen, and drove them not only out of the country, but from the seas. We know how John Foster's young man, with incredible toil, won back the inheritance, the ancestral acres, he had recklessly gambled away. You may win back a fortune, or an estate, or a kingdom, but you cannot win back shattered health or a ruined brain. You cannot win back wasted opportunities or a lost youth. "Give me back my lost youth" is the vainest of prayers. You cannot win back the fair ideals, the hope, the joy, the clear-eyed faith, the ardour of soul, that once were yours.

There is some one thinking of you, my brother, it may be far from this city of throbbing streets and multitudinous traffic, away in some lonely glen or misty island, thinking of you to-day, and praying for you, as Monica prayed for Augustine, that you

may be strong and wise and pure and true to heaven and home, true to what you learned under cleaner skies, and in simpler, safer surroundings. Will you do what you can to answer that prayer? You do not wish to break your mother's heart, or bring down your father's grey hairs with sorrow to the grave, and yet, alas, I have known young men who have done this. I have seen the strong man bowed in helpless agony, dumb with grief, then shaken with wild sobs, over the folly of his twenty-year-old son, and I do not wish to see it again. Many a goodly heritage is wasted every year in this great city, wasted by sloth or vice.

But *secondly*, you may guard and enrich your heritage. You are not only the heirs of all the ages—you are the trustees of posterity. "The history of heroes," said Lord Beaconsfield "is the history of youth." Alfred was only twenty-two when he ascended the throne. Correggio was barely twenty when he painted his famous "Madonna of St Francis." Francis himself was but a youth when he founded the great Franciscan Order.

Gustavus Adolphus was a world-famous soldier at thirty-five. Alexander, Napoleon, and Washington won great battles before they were five-and-twenty. Cortes was only thirty when he conquered Mexico. Ignatius

Loyola was exactly the same age when he wrote the *Spiritual Exercises*. Burns and Raphael died at the "fatal age" of thirty-seven. Pitt was a member of Parliament at twenty-two, Grotius was Attorney-General at twenty-four. Campbell published his *Pleasures of Hope* at twenty-one, and Pollock his *Course of Time* at twenty-five. Handel and Mendelssohn were brilliant composers while still in their teens. But the list is endless.

The Evangelical revival of the eighteenth century was the work of young men. So was the Oxford movement. And so was the social revival associated with the names of Kingsley and Maurice. Whether we think of kings or statesmen, authors or artists, inventors or merchants, we find that the greatest of them achieved their most striking successes, won their brightest laurels, early in youth. The most fascinating figures in the Bible are figures of young men—Joseph the dreamer, David the shepherd-poet, Joshua the relentless soldier, Josiah the boy king, Jacob the aspiring, John the eagle-eyed apostle of love, and Paul the keen theologian.

Let no man, then, despise thy youth. If you would guard and make the most of your heritage, you must, in the first instance, make

the most of yourself—body, mind, and soul. Make the most of your advantages and present opportunities. Self-enrichment, self-realisation, is our first duty. The richer we grow in thought, ideals, personality, the more fitted we are to render useful service to society. True “Education is the development of personality through the inward assimilation of the materials of growth which life brings within one’s reach.”\* We have many ideals claiming our suffrages—the æsthetic, or self-expression of Hellenism, the ascetic, or self-repression of the Hebrew and the Puritan, the socialistic, which undervalues the individual—but the Christian ideal alone is absolute and all-embracing. It includes all that is best in other ideals, finds room for both self-expression and self-restraint, and gives the individual his right place in a regenerated society, a kingdom of God on earth.

It is not sufficient simply to guard our heritage, as the miser guards his gold; we should strive to enlarge it, add to it, and hand it on enriched to the generations yet to be. Every day, in my visiting, I am impressed with the vast amount of vicarious suffering which is the direct result of evil

\* Newman Smyth.

living. The drunkard and the sensualist bequeath to their offspring a frightful legacy of pain in diseased and enfeebled constitutions. Vicious habits, evil living, sinful squandering of nature's resources, life's vital forces, wild oats!—and what can you expect, what can you look for but pain and sorrow, weariness and disease, even to the third and fourth generation! On the other hand, how great and blessed are the results of good habits, pure living, prudence, self-control, increasing and accumulating through generations of noble lives. Every virtue attained, every conquest won, every good habit formed, is treasured up and transmitted to our offspring. In this case, the law of heredity acts beneficially, guarding what has been won, and bequeathing it as a legacy beyond all price. The doctrine of heredity, therefore, has its brighter side. Accumulated good is handed on as well as accumulated evil. May it be yours to win something for posterity, some richer strain in the blood, a more spiritual bias, a set towards higher things.

The man who hid his lord's money and so failed to increase it, was condemned as a wicked and slothful servant. Increase is the law of life. We are servants in charge, stewards who will have to answer for the way we have fulfilled our stewardship. Life itself

is a sacred trust, a tremendous responsibility. Think of living ! Have a clear plan of life.

"Keep ye the law ; be swift in all obedience,  
Clear the land of evil : drive the road and bridge  
the ford."

Cherish lofty ideals and strive to realise them. Hear the call to social service which is rising high and clear to-day. As good citizens, take a deep and practical interest in social movements, and in everything that makes for social righteousness and social happiness ; for here your strength and hope and enthusiasm and enterprise may render grand service.

We have vast problems to face and solve during this twentieth century, tremendous problems which are whitening the heads of our statesmen and wringing the heart of every ardent reformer, problems of intemperance and housing, of poverty, destitution, improvidence, and crime, the problem of the decent unemployed and the loafer who has no desire to work, the problem of the untrained, inefficient worker, problems of the slums and slumland and social wreckage, of child-life, and the degrading, brutalising environment in which so many men, women, and children are forced to live. And it seems to me, that the most pressing problem of all is that of child-life in our cities. How

to save these little ones, how to change brutal existence into human life, how to give them a sound education, and training, and fit them for the strain of life's duties, how to secure for them pure and wholesome surroundings, a good environment—that is a problem worth all the time and energy and thought which our churches and our corporations and our schools can bestow upon it.

Young men, I call upon you to think of these problems. We need you. We need your strength, your hope, your enthusiasm, your enterprise. Give yourselves heart and soul to this grand cause of social regeneration. There is no surer way of enriching your own heritage than by improving the heritage of your less fortunate brothers and sisters.

“Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth ; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart and in the sight of thine eyes, but know that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.” That is the solemn thought I wish to impress upon you—the responsibility of life. Again I say, think of living ! Make the most of your heritage !

It is appointed unto all once to die, and after this the judgment. We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. Intuition, reason, and revelation agree in affirming a

day of reckoning for moral beings like man. A young man is none the worse, but all the better for being reminded of judgment to come. I have no desire to awaken craven fear within your breast, but rather to rouse you to the strenuous life.

It may, or may not, be yours to achieve great things and win the applause of men, but the successful life may assuredly be yours —the life of earnest thought, of lofty aims, of disinterested service—and if you are striving to make the most of your heritage, you need not fear the judgment which God, who is eternal love, shall pass upon your life.

What the world needs to-day is men, strong men, wise men, brave men, devout men.

“ Give us men !  
Men from every rank ;  
Fresh and free and frank ;  
Men of thought and reading,  
Men of light and leading,  
Men of loyal breeding,  
Men of faith, and not of faction . . .  
Men whom highest hope inspires,  
Men whom purest honour fires . . .  
Men who never fail their brothers,  
True, however false are others . . .  
Men who tread where saints have trod,  
Men for country and for God.

Give us men ! I say again,  
Give us men.”



# THE LIMITS OF RESPONSIBILITY

“This man upon the street derives his present being from countless generations of men and women, who bridged for him the gulf between the savage and the civilised estate ; to numberless animal forms, which in the struggle for existence, won the right of his superior structure to survive ; to liberties secured on ancient battlefields, and institutions inherited from unremembered days ; to parents, friends, teachers, books, influences, ideals, inextricably blended in the seamless robe which we all wear and call environment.”

WILLIAM DE WITT HYDE.

---

“It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate :  
I am the captain of my soul.”

W. E. HENLEY.

## CHAPTER II

### THE LIMITS OF RESPONSIBILITY

IN the preceding chapter I have surveyed the inheritance and given you a glimpse of the goodly land. I emphasised the responsibility of life. Now, I freely admit that there are limits to human responsibility. Life certainly is a solemn trust, and it is ours to make the most of it. But we are not responsible for what we inherit—only for what we make of that inheritance. We inherit disposition, we make character. There are certain limits—individual, social, and physiological—with which man moves, but within these limits he is free and responsible. Man, as Tennyson once remarked, is like a bird in a cage, perfectly free within certain fixed limits.

Twenty or thirty years ago when men sought to answer the question: “Is man the master of his fate?” they were at once brought face to face with what theologians called the decrees of God. It was believed

## 24 THE LIMITS OF RESPONSIBILITY

that God had decreed from all eternity how many were to be saved and how many were to be lost. Some men and women, favourites of heaven, were vessels of honour doomed to be saved, while the vast majority of mankind, including non-elect infants, were vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. And it was supposed God did all this for His own pleasure and His own glory. There was no justice or humanity, not to say divine love in the arrangement. It made the God of Christians worse than Moloch, and I may safely say that very few, if any, believe it now. We have travelled far beyond that. We have freed ourselves from this grim and inhuman system of theology which did more than anything else to drive thinking men away from the Church. Under that system no man was free, no man was master of his fate.

In these modern days, science has substituted *heredity* and *environment* for the decrees of God. We are told that a man is simply the product of his ancestors, that he inherits a fixed number of good or evil qualities, and that no credit is due to him for his goodness, no blame due to him for his wickedness, or weakness, or folly. If that were so, man would not be the master of his fate; he would be the slave of the past, the helpless victim of heredity, and we would be in the

grasp of a system as cold and hard and grim as the old theology from which we have happily escaped. It would simply be "Calvinism with God left out."

Again, man is said to be the product of environment, and socialists and other social reformers who are not socialists say that God created boys and girls to live decently, but our social system makes them into criminals and gaol-birds. Now, if environment be omnipotent, man is not free, he is not the master of his fate. We must, therefore, consider heredity and environment. They are admittedly prime social factors, two master forces in social life. Dramatists of the Ibsen school have gone wild over heredity. If the extreme views of heredity held good, there would be no such thing as responsibility, no such thing as sin. Crime would be simply a disease.

What are the precise facts about heredity? There is no doubt we are born into a heritage of accumulated results, and our physical framework largely reflects our ancestry. Our features, our complexion, our gestures, the colour of our hair, our temperament, our handwriting, our bearing and walk often recall some ancestor near or remote. So do our mental and moral qualities. Talent and virtue run in families as well as red hair.

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He "comes of a good stock," he is "out of an ill nest," are significant phrases we hear daily. Our heritage may be a heritage of power or a heritage of weakness. How far *acquired* characteristics, physical, mental, and moral, may be transmitted by the individual to his immediate descendants, is still a matter of debate. Spencer and Darwin maintain they are transmitted, while Weismann and Haeckel assert they are not. Each theory is supported by an impressive array of facts. There is much to be said for both, but in my opinion the evidence is greatly in favour of the view held by Spencer and Darwin. If acquired characteristics do not descend, it is difficult to see where degeneration or improvement can come in. Heredity is a factor in the regeneration, as well as in the degeneration, of the race. There is a heritage of grace, of holiness, of spiritual power. Heredity may either lessen or increase a man's responsibility. Responsibility may be lessened, but not destroyed altogether. Man is more than a "bundle of transmitted tendencies, the resultant of antecedent forces." Freedom is real. "We hear a great deal of the doctrine of heredity," says Benjamin Jowett, late Master of Balliol, "and there is value in such observations, if they teach us the direction in which the greatest resistance has to be made.

We do not wish to ignore the inherited evil tendencies of men, but effectually to combat them, and, therefore, we must arouse in our minds the consciousness of freedom . . . that intelligent freedom which knows how great an effect may be produced by the continuous exertion of a very small force during many years, whether in the mind or the body. About the works of the machine we know far more than formerly, but this knowledge will be worse than useless if it paralyses the will.”\*

Look now at *environment*. There are some who claim environment as the one sufficient law and explanation of life. I think they go too far. They ignore the inward, the personal equation, altogether. I do not believe that environment is everything, any more than that heredity is everything. In the same house, subject to precisely the same environment, are two sons: one is virtuous, the other is a prodigal. It is Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau over again. Keble wonders how it is that

“ Brothers in blood and nurture too,  
Aliens in hearts so oft should prove,  
One lose, the other keep, Heaven’s clue,  
One dwell in wrath, and one in love,”

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\* *College Sermons.*

or as Oliver Wendell Holmes puts it :

“From the same cradle side,  
From the same mother’s knee ;  
One to long darkness and the frozen tide  
One to the peaceful sea.”

Environment, then, is not everything, but it is a great deal, a very great deal more than many people imagine. The great majority of mankind have not yet awakened to the tremendous influence of environment, and some exaggeration of a truth is often necessary to rouse society. I read an article lately on “How Criminals are Made.” The article showed the process of manufacture in two instances. First, that of a girl born poor, very poor, her father and mother the victims of long hours, miserable fare, and vitiated atmosphere. Three of her brothers and sisters sickened and died, but she struggled against fate and managed to live. As a child, she crawled about in a city slum, hunted here and chased there, cold in winter, ill-fed in summer, uncared for, growing up white and sickly like a flower in a cellar, having this impression burned in upon her soul that society as organised had no place for her. Grown up, she found some work such as one so weak and ill-fed as she could do, but she could not earn enough to live

upon honestly, and a weary vista of miserable years stretched away ahead of her. I need not follow her career any further. Very soon she found herself among the flotsam and jetsam of our social wreckage, in and out of prison. Had she a chance?

The second case was that of a boy, also a child of the slums, cursed and kicked for playing on the staircase, chased by the policeman for playing football on the street. In burning July with shirt and trousers on he goes swimming in the fountain in Hyde Park. He is caught and sent to prison. There he meets veterans in crime, and is initiated into their unhallowed secrets, and emerges from prison with the makings of a first-class criminal.

Every one would admit that the responsibility of these two human beings was lessened almost to the vanishing point by their terrible environment. They never had a proper chance of living a decent human life. Only the omniscient and unerring God can apportion the responsibility and the blame. And be sure that on us also, as citizens, part of the blame shall fall for permitting the existence of such an environment for any of the children of the State. So long as we have slums we shall have criminals. The slum is the nursery and forcing-bed for rearing criminals.

Environment, I believe, is more powerful than heredity. It can check heredity. In proof of this, I would point to Mr Quarrier's great work in the Orphan Homes of Scotland. His life is devoted to the rescue of city waifs, and 95 per cent. of them turn out well. Removed from their evil environment and placed in sweet, wholesome, Christian surroundings, they grow up healthy, honest, industrious, and exemplary. The same result attends the boarding-out of pauper children with foster-parents instead of keeping them in large institutions. This system removes the pauper brand, breaks the living chain of hereditary pauperism, and goes far to justify Emerson in thinking that, given a good environment, each generation begins the world afresh in perfect freedom, and that the present is not the prisoner of the past. It is not a case of a goat being brought up among sheep and remaining a goat to the end. The goat becomes a sheep. The inherent evil qualities never manifest themselves for want of a suitable environment. Thus environment may counteract heredity, and this fact is full of encouragement for the social reformer and Christian worker. The worst part of a slum child's heritage is his environment. We shall fight heredity with environment, nature with nurture. Along these lines lies hope.

Abolish the slum, remove what is ugly, unwholesome, and degrading. For mean streets and squalid courts and foul atmosphere, substitute pure air, open spaces, grass, flowers, and trees. Surround the young life of our cities with helpful, elevating, invigorating influences. A large order, you say. Yes, but an order that has got to be executed somehow, if the physical and moral deterioration of our people is to be arrested. It is only when I return from a visit to the country that the full horror of slum-life bursts upon me. It all seems so horrible, so unnatural, so suggestive of the pit. The slum-child heavily handicapped from birth, entering on life with a poor physique, with strong predisposition to disease and vice, reared amidst an environment well fitted to develop these predispositions, what chance has he of forming good habits, of learning how to live a true human life, and becoming what God meant him to be? The problem of the child raises all other problems. It lies at the root of all social well-being and social progress. Neglect of the children is not only criminal; it is suicidal. Three hundred years ago our forefathers said in the preamble to the Education Scheme of 1560: "Of necessitie it is that your honours be most cairful for the virtuous education and Godlie upbringing of the youth

of this realm." This warning is even more needed to-day. More and more we are persuaded that preventive rather than reformative work is what is wanted. We have been dealing long enough with effects; we must now attack the causes of our social wreckage. There is an awful waste of young life going on in our cities. This was noted by the African chief, King Khama, when he actually said: " You English take great care of your goods, but you throw away your people." Dr Barnardo and Mr Quarrier are doing a noble work, and yet a work which fills one with despair. It is good to rescue a wretched waif here and there, but what of the thousands who are not rescued—who are left to welter in their misery? Can we not do something to make the conditions of existence a little more humane, a little more Christian? " You cannot," says Lord Rosebery, " rear an Imperial race in a slum." To rescue is good; but to remove the causes that make rescue necessary is better. Ninety-five out of every hundred of our rescued waifs and of our boarded-out children give a good account of themselves in the battle of life. How many of them would have turned out well had they been left in the slums or in these huge unhomelike barracks we build for our poor? One shudders at the inevitable

answer. And if a hundred well-born infants were taken from west-end homes and placed in the slums, and allowed to grow up there as slum children do, how many of them would do credit to their ancestry? No doubt there have been cases where inherited good qualities have persisted in the teeth of a bad environment, but the infrequency of such cases proves my contention that environment is more powerful than heredity. Therefore, I say, redeem the environment.

There is one force which can check heredity and neutralise environment, and that is *religion*. Christian biography shows what men heavily weighted by heredity and environment can accomplish when the Christ-power is enlisted on their side. Again and again has the victory gone to the man of religious faith. Bring a man under the power of religion, and be his environment what it may, he will be more than conqueror. He will even draw strength for the conflict from the hostile forces arrayed against him. Unhappily, the denizens of the slums are seldom under the power of religion, notwithstanding all the noble, self-sacrificing efforts expended by the churches and by individual workers. Here and there some soul is touched, some faith is evoked, but the return is meagre and out of all proportion to the

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time and money and energy expended. The struggle for existence is so fierce and engrossing that trying to win the inhabitants of the slums to the religious life is like trying to create a soul beneath the ribs of death. Yet these efforts are fruitful in a way we seldom think of, or care to think of. They help to hold in leash the wild forces of anarchy and revolution.

In conclusion, if, as we have seen, an evil environment lessens responsibility, let us remember that a good environment increases it. I do not suppose that one of my readers could be truthfully described as a slum child. We have all enjoyed certain advantages—a good home training, Sunday school, church, and other refining influences and helpful associations. Certain things were no doubt given us, they were not ours of choice—given us to work on, to make or mar. Our dispositions, individual gifts and qualities, strength or infirmity of will, our physical, mental, and spiritual outfit, our environment and circumstances, are all so much raw material out of which we are to weave the fabric of our individual lives, and a great deal depends upon the weaver. We may weave well or ill. We may utterly ruin our web, or we may produce a fair design which will win the approbation of God and man. We have free

will, and we know from experience that we can resist our evil inclinations and triumph over circumstances. The soul in its consciousness of freedom repudiates determinism. Man as a moral agent is free—free to choose, free to think, free to act. Hence the exhortations of Scripture ; “Choose ye this day whom ye will serve. I have set before you life and death, therefore choose life. Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good.” Power of choice implies free will and therefore responsibility. Christ in addressing men always assumed their freedom of choice—“Follow Me, come unto Me. Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life.” And the Apostolic injunction, “Quench not the spirit,” has no meaning unless we are able to do so. Our destiny is thus largely, if not wholly, in our own hands. “I can—I ought—I will.” We are not feathers in the wind, or straws on the stream, but men with souls and wills and consciences, and as men we fix our destiny by our character, and we fix our character by our actions. Young men should not waste their time and strength wailing over heredity and environment. Believe that you are the master of your fate in the strength of God. Keep your lives moving in the orbit of the divine will, and the stars in their courses will fight for you. Old artists used to write at the foot of

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their pictures: "Finished, by the help of God." That was grandly true. In character building it is the same. Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it. If heredity plus environment constitute man, then heredity plus environment plus divine grace constitute the Christian. Always acknowledging that God is supreme over all, and on the side of him who does the right, be brave and play the man. It is the plucky man that is the lucky man. Never give in, or confess that you are beaten. Don't be afraid of hard work or hardship. These are God's discipline for making men and heroes. "Take," says a modern writer, "the highest hearted, cleanest souled men of our race or nation, and you will always find they were disciplined into power, and to-day you will often hear it said of a man who has gained great eminence in his work: 'that man has had a hard struggle for it. If you only knew what he has gone through to get to his present position, you would be very much astonished. He has not drifted with the tide. His has been no bed of roses.'"<sup>\*</sup>

Quite so, that is true of hundreds. It is true of every victorious life the world has

\* Walter J. Mathams in *Comrades All.*

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ever known. Forward, then, along the path of duty with a dauntless heart.

“There is something high and noble  
For a soul like yours to do ;  
There are conquests, glories, trophies,  
To be won by such as you.  
Let your eye be ever looking  
On your mighty Leader’s crest,  
Follow Him, obey His orders,  
Go ahead and do your best.

“Never fear what foe assails you,  
Never dread the roar of fight ;  
Hold it true, you can’t be beaten  
In the struggle for the right.  
Stand your ground in hottest fire-storm,  
With your comrades march abreast,  
Swing the sword of God around you—  
Go ahead and do your best.”



STRENGTH—INITIATIVE—LOVE

“Health is the condition of perfect development.  
. . . Health is beauty, energy, holiness, happiness.”

T. L. NICHOLS, M.D.

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“A little love, a little trust,  
A soft impulse, a sudden dream,  
And life as dry as desert dust,  
Is fresher than a mountain stream.  
So simple is the heart of man,  
So ready for new hope and joy,  
Ten thousand years since it began,  
Have left it younger than a boy.”

STOPFORD BROOKE.

## CHAPTER III

### STRENGTH—INITIATIVE—LOVE

#### *I.—The Heritage of Strength*

I HAVE referred to the abounding vitality, the tireless energy of youth. The glory of young men is their strength, and strength can only be maintained by strict obedience to the laws of health. These laws are now well and widely known. They are few and simple. Fresh air, cleanliness, wholesome food, sufficient exercise, secure these things ; shun vice and excesses of all kinds, and health will be yours, unless your case is exceptional. I shall have to note by and by some of the things that waste the heritage. At present I wish to emphasise the duty of being strong and healthy. Ill health is a social sin. Our age has rediscovered the body. Fresh air and sunshine as potent factors in the matter of health were never so belauded as now. Sanatoria for the open air treatment of consumption are springing up everywhere.

"Physical culture" is being preached in numerous periodicals with all the fervour of a new gospel. A Royal Commission has considered the question of physical training, and physical drill is now a recognised item in the curriculum of every well-appointed school. Every lover of his country and his kind must rejoice at this quickened interest in the proper development of the body. That there was need for it is proved by the startling evidence given before the Commission, and also by the large number of candidates for the army who are annually rejected as physically unfit. In Manchester, for example, only one out of every eleven applicants was found physically fit for military service. In Edinburgh, the Royal Commission found that 19.17 per cent. of the school children were in poor health, and that 29.83 per cent. were badly nourished. Of course, something more than exercise or training is needed to secure physical efficiency. You must have something to train. There is clamant need for reform in *dietary*, especially in the homes of the poor. There is bad feeding as well as underfeeding. One is scarcely surprised when he meets puny, stunted creatures in a city slum, but when he meets them in the country, he is staggered and begins to ask the reason why. In September last, I drove across the island of Lewis from

Stornoway to Callernish to see the famous standing stones at that lonely yet beautiful spot. It was a perfect day. The sky was one wide expanse of cloudless blue, the moors on either hand were dreaming in the warmth of the sun, the air was clear, bracing, exhilarating, and tasted salt from the sea.

At various points on our drive when passing little clusters of houses that looked like African kraals, and were barely distinguishable from the brown peaty moor, we were followed by groups of children who were evidently sustained by great expectations of backsheesh from the wealthy Sassenach. They were persevering and ingenious, but it was neither their ingenuity nor their perseverance that impressed me. It was their delicate, puny, underfed look. That on these wide heathery moors, swept day and night by ocean breezes, in that glorious, life-giving atmosphere and under that brilliant sky, we should find boys and girls as stunted, as fragile-looking as those we meet in a city slum, was a staggering experience, and provocative of thought and enquiry. The enquiry elicited the fact that these children were not so much underfed as badly fed. Oatmeal is seldom or never used, and the fine fresh eggs the children ought to get are sent

to Stornoway in exchange for tea! There is comparatively little recruiting done now in the Lewis. The young men are not up to the standard, they are physically unfit, because they are not properly fed. What the Lewis needs to-day even more than a West Coast Mission is a staff of trained teachers of cookery, to travel through the townships and instruct the parents in the preparation of simple, nutritious food. And we need a similar staff in the slums of our great cities. The physical degeneracy that is so apparent is largely due to bad feeding, and no improvement need be hoped for until we have a radical and salutary reform in dietary. It is high time some one started a crusade against the everlasting tea and pastry which is making our young women so anaemic and our young men so pithless. Let us go back to the wholesome porridge and nutritious broth which, until recent years, produced the "buirdly chiels and clever hizzies" for which our race was famous.

It is a good sign that *outdoor games* are increasing in popularity as well as indoor gymnastics, for exercise in the open air is the ideal. It yields a better return. A round at golf on a hillside course or on the breezy links is worth whole days in the gymnasium. Cycling, quoiting, bowling, cricket, tennis,

hockey, and football each have their devotees. Many, like Hazlitt, are content with walking. "Give me," said that brilliant essayist and indefatigable pedestrian, "give me a clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me and a three hours' march to dinner, and then to thinking. It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy." Alexander Smith was a great walker, as his charming volume, *A Summer in Skye*, eloquently testifies. Charles Lamb wished to walk on and on, and "die walking."

Few men, however, enjoy being alone as Hazlitt did. Most men of an athletic turn prefer games into which the social element largely enters and forms no inconsiderable part of the charm. For me, golf is without a peer, and next to golf I place cricket, but if the value of a game is to be judged by the numbers who play it, or by the numbers who look on when it is played, then beyond all question the palm must be awarded to *football*. Now think for a moment of this game, and, if possible, let us think calmly and without prejudice. Some hate it, and many love it, and some who hate it have never seen it played. They have only heard of it, or seen the

crowds hurrying fieldwards on the day of some great match. It may be, some one they know has suffered through football, has been led astray, and for this reason they denounce the game as wholly and hopelessly evil. But would it not be almost as reasonable to denounce the sun in the heavens because some one we know has suffered sunstroke.

It is worse than useless, I submit, to shriekingly condemn this game. That does not help us in the least to solve the problem of its popularity. We should rather set ourselves to understand why it is so popular. Why is the world like one great meadow, and all the men and boys merely football players? Why is young Scotland, and young England, running all to foot and leg? What is the secret charm of this game? Go where we will throughout the land, in quiet village or crowded city, this game meets us face to face. Children play it in the streets with a paper ball, an old rag, or a crust of bread. What is the explanation? Simply this, that it is a first-rate game, healthy and exciting to play, and almost as exciting to watch.

Just picture the scene! Two-and-twenty muscular young fellows in smart attire, the green grass beneath their feet, the blue sky overhead, with tier above tier of eager human faces all round the gigantic enclosure, an

immense circle of terraced humanity, two-and-twenty trained athletes, straining every nerve and muscle in honourable contest, striving to the uttermost for victory—is it any wonder that the crowds gather in their tens of thousands to witness a scene like this and to cheer themselves hoarse? It reminds one of nothing so much as the tournaments in the proud days of chivalry which Chaucer has described in the *Knight's Tale*, and Sir Walter with immortal pen has portrayed for us in *Ivanhoe*.

No doubt, like many other excellent things, football is liable to abuse. Certain evils have come to be associated with it, such as gambling, drinking, and profanity, but they have nothing to do with the game, and are no more part of it than hypocrisy is a part of Christianity. Men who bet and drink and swear at a football match will bet and drink and swear wherever they are. Rowdyism is not peculiar to the football field, but is found wherever masses of young life are gathered, even within the scholastic precincts of the University quadrangle.

My objection to the game is that too few play it; that it is falling too much into the hands of professionalism. There are too many onlookers, and there is no exercise in looking on. Men rave about football who

never kicked a ball in their life. I have frequently an experience like this: I go into a house on a Saturday afternoon and ask if John or James is at home. "No," replies the housewife, "he is away at a football match."

"Is your son very fond of football?"

"Oh yes, he thinks there's nothing like football."

"Where does he play?" I innocently enquire.

"Oh!" with a surprised look, "he never plays, he just looks on." That is the kind of thing I deprecate and deplore. The young man I admire is not the one who goes wild over some professional, but the young man who is a member of a club and can give a good account of himself in the field. And depend upon it, he is the very man who can most appreciate the International when he sees it, even as the winner of the amateur golf Championship enjoys most keenly the play of Harry Vardon or Alexander Herd.

Played in moderation (for excess here, as in everything else, is an undoubted evil), football is a noble game and a splendid form of exercise. An eminent physician said to me the other day that football is the very life of hundreds of our city youth, and makes nervousness and silly fears fly like morning mists before the sun.

Finally, concerning outdoor games in

general, I would remark that besides keeping you strong and physically fit, they afford a pleasant yet most valuable moral discipline. They develop the very qualities which win success in life—patience, perseverance, and self-control, and also the altruistic qualities of sympathy, good humour, comradeship, brotherhood.

### *II.—Power of Initiative*

I have claimed power of initiative as peculiarly youth's own. The daring of youth is partly due to ignorance and inexperience. "Had I known what I know now, I never would have tried it," men often say. With advancing years we shrink from new enterprises and new beginnings, and we lose the power of initiative. Increasing knowledge and experience kill it. The price we pay for knowledge is too often loss of faith and enterprise. We grow cautious, we dread failure, but

"In the lexicon of youth, which fate reserves  
For a bright manhood, there is no such word  
As fail."

Youth is resourceful, self-reliant, confident, and easily adapts itself to changing condi-

tions. While the elderly cling to the old, and even the antiquated, youth extends a glad welcome to the new. The spirit of youth is ever the spirit of dauntless enterprise, the spirit of the pioneer, the inventor, the explorer, the spirit which sent Cook and Columbus in search of new worlds beyond the foam. The true emblem of youth, to use Milton's grand simile, is the eagle "Kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam."

America is fast outstripping the world in the race for commercial supremacy, because America is emphatically a nation of young men, "men of the morning." Their greatest concerns are in the hands of young men. Their best-known men, in political, commercial, and journalistic circles, are young men. In our own land, the firms which are wholly or largely composed of young men are forging ahead and outdistancing their less enterprising competitors. We are waking up to the value of young blood. Youth is coming to its Kingdom.

Power of initiative implies thought and action. It is power to conceive, originate, and execute, and the young man who possesses this power to-day in any conspicuous degree has the world at his feet. For him employers are daily on the outlook, and he can command his own terms.

I know a young man who, when out of employment, obtained a situation in a belt-making factory. He had never been inside a belt-making factory before, yet he was there only a few weeks when he went to his employer and suggested an improvement on a certain machine. The improvement was duly considered, adopted, patented, and introduced. It meant an annual saving to the firm of hundreds of pounds. From that moment our young friend was marked out for promotion, which soon came. Modern industrial life is not favourable to individuality. Division of labour tends to make work dull, monotonous, and uninteresting. The workman must combat this tendency, and keep his intelligence awake, or he will degenerate into a mere automaton.

The reason why many young fellows fail of success is that they lack a real interest in their work. Interest sharpens the faculties and promotes efficiency. Interest is the secret of all good work. Men who dawdle listlessly over their work and jog along in a dull mechanical routine, never working up to their powers, are not likely to advance either their employers' interests or their own. It is pitiful when a man looks for all his pleasure outside his work, and not in his work. Joy in work is closely related to efficiency.

Young men will do well to cultivate the power of initiative, not only because of its high commercial value, but because it is valuable in itself. It adds to the zest of life. It means a certain measure of self-culture, and is sure evidence that a man is not rusting, but living and thinking strenuously.

### *III.—The Lordship of Love*

The influence of love for good or evil in a young man's life is incalculable. A few men like Mr Cecil J. Rhodes may rise to eminence without the inspiration of love, but they constitute a very small minority of successful men. Woman is the guiding star of the average man. Sometimes she is his evil star—a star that leads astray. But generally it is otherwise. "Ruined by a woman" might no doubt be truthfully said of some men, but "saved by a woman" might with equal truth be written over thousands of successful and happy lives. Love has a purifying and elevating power. "The Lordship of Love," says Dante, "is good in that it withdraweth the inclination of his liegeman from all vile things." Love keeps pure, and therefore it is a great pity and a great loss when it is late in coming into a young man's

life. It will redeem a man who has fallen, like Kingsley's river cleansing its waters as it hurries along to the taintless tide and the leaping bar, after escaping from the foulness of the city, but it can do better still. It can prevent a man from sinning. It is a safeguarding power, withdrawing the thoughts and inclinations from what is vile and impure, and setting them upon higher things. It also exerts a strengthening influence upon character. It gives unity, coherence, force. It makes a man strong to do and to dare. It has done more than inspire men to swim the Hellespont. Fortunes have been won to lay at a woman's feet. Pictures have been painted, poems have been written, battles have been fought, and doughty deeds have been done to win a woman's smile. Love makes the weak strong and the coward brave.

“Love found upon the battle’s edge,  
A coward fleeing from the strife ;  
And sent him forth his heart in pledge,  
Valiant thro’ life.

“Love touched dumb lips that could not pray,  
And lo, they uttered prayer and song ;  
Love hath so subtle sweet a way,  
Love is so strong.”

Sweet and beautiful is a mother’s love for

her babe, powerful is a young man's love for his mother, heroic is the patriot's love for his country, noble is the philanthropist's love for the race, but the love of a man for a maid is stronger and mightier than all.

I admit there may be a strain of selfishness in it. Self does not always "pass in music out of sight." It is not so disinterested as the patriot's or philanthropist's, it is perhaps not so spiritual as filial or maternal love, but it is a sublime thing all the same. It is capable of infinite sacrifice for its object. It is distinctly a power to be reckoned with, one of the master influences in a young man's life.

Were I to offer advice, I would recommend you to read the description of the ideal wife contained in the 31st chapter of the book of Proverbs. But love is such a wayward sprite that advice seems almost futile, if not impertinent. Men are caught by a pretty face, or a graceful mien, and are often amazingly blind to the absence of solid worth. There is a time, as Principal Caird has reminded us, when even nonsense sounds charming from pretty lips, but the misery is that the prettiness goes, while the nonsense remains. Orlie Grange's sister lamented his infatuation for a heartless woman. "The glory," she said, "was all in the worshipper." We know exactly what she meant. Every man con-

sciously or unconsciously has his ideal, and when he falls in love, he transfers to the real the qualities of his ideal. Hence you talk to him in vain, and hence the extraordinary marriages we see. This only would I say to any young man contemplating marriage, that the first essential quality in a wife is *sound health*. "There is one means of improving the race in addition to right living, which is often sadly neglected—that is, the right selection of partners in life in marriage. Some science as well as love should come in there. When weaklings marry weaklings, when the nervous marry the nervous, when those with insanity in their brain cells marry those with similar tendencies, when consumptives marry those with a weakness that way, then, beyond any doubt, future generations will not be likely to enjoy the unspeakable blessings of health of body and soundness of mind."\* In addition to sound health, look for good sense, industry, unselfishness, truthfulness, and religious faith. If beauty be added, so much the better, but without these, beauty is a poor bargain. Secure these qualities in your wife, and you have secured something far above rubies.

\* Dr Clouston on *Health of Body and Soundness of Mind*.



## VISION AND ASPIRATION

“ Your young men shall see visions.”

JOEL.

“ Cradling his soul in dreams.”

OETHE.

“ I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.”

ST PAUL.

## CHAPTER IV

### VISION AND ASPIRATION

NO one will deny that Vision and Aspiration form part of the heritage of youth. When the worn eyes of the aged become dim and the vision waxes faint, glimpses of the new day are granted to the fresh eager eyes of youth. "Your young men shall see visions"—visions of peace and power, of righteousness triumphant and love enthroned, visions of the coming Kingdom of God.

"Only in dreams is a ladder thrown  
From the weary earth to the sapphire walls."

Yes, but in the waking dreams, the golden dreams of youth.

My brother, I pity you if in your finer moments you have not unutterable longings and vague grand aspirations which defy expression. Perhaps, like Joseph, you have

been called a dreamer of dreams. Well, never mind. The dreaming man is the waking man, and what the dreaming man does the waking man may do. The thoughts of the day also become the dreams of the night. Dreams are not always the "children of an idle brain." Joseph's dreams reflected his waking thoughts. They revealed, if you will, his ambition and his desire for pre-eminence. Jacob's dream at Bethel likewise shed a revealing light upon the nature of his aspirations, and they were far from unworthy. You should read Dr Matheson's original and fine interpretation of Jacob's character in his brilliant book, *The Representative Men of the Bible*. It will give you an entirely new and striking conception of one of the most complex characters in Scripture. Well-authenticated and significant dreams (for there are such) may be arranged in four classes—consolatory, retributive, warning, and prophetic. Many men and women have had consolation conveyed to them by means of a dream. "Fear not, I am with thee, all is well"—is the cheering message flashed into many a soul in visions of the night.

Again, there are *retributive dreams*, the dreams of the murderer and the seducer and the crafty designing villain—the dreams of a Eugene Aram, or of a Richard III., who used

to see all the victims he had murdered crying and shrieking out against him—"a surging ocean of human faces upturned to the heavens, faces imploring, wrathful, despairing." Clarence's dream was mainly prophetic of his end, yet it was also retributive, for he says :

"Then came wandering by a shadow like an  
angel  
With bright hair dabbled in blood,  
And shrieked out—'Clarence is come,  
False, fleeting, perjured Clarence, that  
Stabbed me in the field by Tewkesbury,  
Seize on him, furies, take him to your  
torments.'"

Young men there are who have been haunted, and deservedly haunted, by the white set face of some trusting girl whom they had betrayed. What wonder that the dreams of such are full of hideous, ghastly sights, and that they awake shuddering with horror and fear. It is the inevitable result of a wicked life, and their present experience is only a foretaste of the sufferings of that hell which they have created for themselves! Young men, beware, fly not in the face of law. Retribution is certain. Its wheels are noiseless, yet merciless. Sow the wind and you will reap the whirlwind.

Again, there are *warning dreams*. They are the shadows of real events thrown before, indicating that a certain course of action persisted in will bring disaster. These dreams often reflect the fears, hopes, and wishes of the day. Yet warning dreams are often unheeded. Cæsar's wife had an ominous dream, and implored her husband to remain indoors on that fatal day. He laughed at her fears, went forth, and soon fell beneath the daggers of Brutus and the rest. Warning dreams are danger signals. They show us what we are most exposed to, and on what side of our nature we have most need to guard ourselves. Blessed are the pure in heart and the upright in life, for their dreams shall be sweet.

Lastly, there are *prophetic dreams*. Joseph's dreams were all of this class, all prophetic of his future greatness. He dreamed that in the harvest field the sheaves of his brothers made obeisance to his sheaf. He dreamed that the sun, and moon, and eleven stars, *i.e.*, his father, mother, and eleven brothers, made obeisance to him. This was more than human nature could stand, and we are not surprised that his brothers were both jealous and angry, and actually tried to get rid of him. But his dreams came true. They were fulfilled to the letter. We know how great he

became. Joseph, the Dreamer, became Prime Minister of Egypt. And we know how his brethren, seeking corn in Egypt when there was dire famine everywhere else, humbly prostrated themselves in their ignorance before their long-lost brother—the man they had tried to murder. How the wheels of Divine Justice revolve, and bring men's sins home to their bosoms! Other men besides Joseph have seen their future greatness foreshadowed in dreams. Yea, in cases not a few, in dreams they have been shown their life-work. Joan of Arc, the Saviour of France, Savonarola, the Saviour of Italy, Father Matthew, the Saviour of Ireland, Saint Francis and Saint Dominic, all saw their life-work first, and received their divine call in dreams.

Viewed in this way, the dreams of young men are really the aspirations of young men. The dreams of night are a pretty accurate reflection of the aspirations of the day. There is not much hope of a young man who does not cherish aspirations, and who is not "attended by the vision splendid." Isaac Newton and George Stephenson were dreamy boys. All reformers are dreamers and visionaries. John Howard, Elizabeth Fry, Samuel Wilberforce, Joseph Mazzini, David Livingstone, and Father Damien were all in-

spired and led on by glorious day-dreams, splendid aspirations! Cherish your aspirations, then. They may not all be realised, but some of them will. I have never yet met a successful man who had not aspirations in his youth. The really noble thing about any man, it has been truly said, is the deathless aspiration which for ever drives him forward and upward. But you must do more than dream: you must act. You must not despise or shirk hard work. There is no royal road to success, only the broad highway of unflagging toil. Strive to do noble things, and not merely dream them all day long. And do them to-day.

“Your future has deeds of glory,  
    Of honour (God grant it may),  
But your aim will never be stronger,  
    Or the need so great as to-day.”

I have never felt that I could honestly echo the cry of a disappointed courtier and charge young men to “fling away ambition.” Too many of them have done that already on their own initiative, and they are the poorer for it. The rightness or wrongness of a man’s ambition is decided by the object he aims at, and by the spirit in which he pursues it. Guard against selfishness, and then be as ambitious

as you like. There was nothing wrong in Swift's ambition :

"I've often wished that I had clear  
For life, six hundred pounds a year,  
A handsome house to lodge a friend,  
A river at my garden's end."

Sir James Stephen said that he might sum up all he had to say to young men in the single word—*aspire*. Aspiration leads to achievement. Of course, you wish to succeed in your calling. But over and above this, there are two dreams well worth cherishing. There is the *dream of a fairer social state*, when the foul blots presently disfiguring our Christian civilisation shall be removed. No one can say that the present condition of society, especially in cities, is satisfactory. There is a great deal of hardship and misery. The struggle for existence is distressingly keen. Vice and crime are rampant. Drunkenness and impurity, dishonesty and gambling, injustice and oppression, spread their black and baleful shadows over society.

Yet it would be unfair not to admit the improvement that has taken place. We have only to compare things as they are to-day, with things as they were a hundred, or even fifty years ago. Since Mrs Browning wrote the "Cry of the Children," and Hood wrote the "Song of the Shirt," there has been marvellous

progress. A plentiful supply of fresh water, more sanitary dwellings, higher wages, shorter hours of labour, increase of sobriety—these things are quite the order of the day. The era we live in is distinctly an era of social reform. The social side of Christianity is emphasised as it never was before. The social conscience, itself of recent growth, is becoming more sensitive and more imperious every year. Still there is much to do, as socialistic writers show, and render a service in showing. We should welcome every honest criticism, every genuine addition to our knowledge of facts. We should welcome light from any quarter. Let us have the truth at any cost. We still find people living in unhealthy dwellings, children starving, and men and women overworked and underpaid. The social reformer has his work before him. But, at least, our eyes are open. We can no longer plead ignorance. And we believe that *in Christianity or nowhere lies the solution of all our social problems.* For perfect social well-being we need nothing more than applied Christianity. All that is true in socialism has been borrowed from Christianity. Socialism is the natural reaction from rank individualism. Both are extremes ; the truth lies between, in a wise union of both. When a man proclaims himself an open enemy of

the Christian religion which has been the means of bringing about our greatest reforms, we know what to think of him and his schemes of social reform. With Christian socialism which preaches the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of men (phrases becoming a trifle hackneyed) and seeks to carry out Christ's teaching in social and industrial life, every one of us is in hearty accord. We wish to see every injustice removed, every wrong redressed, every chance given to every man to make the most of himself and enjoy the fruits of his labour. The day is surely coming when "oppression and fraud and over-reaching and squalid poverty and foul slums and sweating shops and opium dens and gambling hells and the multiplied allurements to drunkenness and unrighteous gains and the envy of the poor towards the rich and the pride of the rich scorning the poor"—when all these shall have forever ceased. Most firmly I believe that out of our social and moral chaos God will yet call a kingdom of righteousness, of peace, of joy, and order. Call that a dream, if you will ; it is a dream worth cherishing.

"There are coming changes great  
In the glad new time,  
It is worth our while to wait  
For the glad new time ;

Mountain fears shall prostrate lie,  
Vales of hope be lifted high,  
Trembling earth embrace the sky,  
In the glad new time.

“There shall meet the great and small  
In the glad new time,  
Love shall be the lord of all  
In the glad new time ;  
From the mountains shall descend  
Hearts of old that could not bend,  
And the poor shall have a friend  
In the glad new time.”

Then, *secondly*, there is the dream of a *nobler life for the individual*—a life of purity, love, and service. There is eternal truth in individualism. Egoism preserves the individual, altruism preserves the species. Egoism makes altruism possible. The human race can only arrive at its long goal of perfection through the perfection of the individual. Only through the individual can society be regenerated. If you wish to make society good and happy, you must proceed by making the individuals which compose it good and happy. There is no recipe for doing so in any wholesale fashion. One by one men hear the divine call and enter upon the life of purity, love, and service. One by one they enlist in the army of God, in the service of Christ and humanity. One by one they are

fired and filled with the enthusiasm of redeeming love.

Youth is apt to feed on fiction, and fiction of the feebler sort—not the robust fiction of Scott, Thackeray, George Eliot, or George Meredith. Feeding on weak and sensational fiction creates for the readers an unreal world in which they live and move. They become in turn every character they read about, and live in a world of fantasy, treading some stately marble halls, until they are roughly awakened by contact with the hard realities of life, and then they experience a feeling of disgust at their homely surroundings, like Cinderella when she found herself once more a kitchen drudge instead of a princess.

We have all read of the Oriental who had invested his savings in a basket of crockery which he went to sell at a good profit. He sat down in the sun and fell into a day-dream. He saw his crockery well sold, and more bought and sold ; then a shop taken, and after some years a fortune made. He began to give receptions. A man who had been his enemy approached to make his obeisance, but our successful merchant threw out his foot to spurn him, when, alas, his foot struck his basket, knocked it over, and smashed all the ware. His all was gone. His day-dream

had ruined him. Are there not many like this, who, living in an unreal world, sacrifice the real to the imaginary, the living, potential, fateful present to the uncertain future? You will never dream yourself into giving receptions, or into success of any kind.

“I slept and dreamt that life was beauty,  
I woke and found that life was duty.”

The sooner all young men can say the same, the better it will be for them. Some have learned it when it was too late, after a wasted life. Lowell has described one such in his terrible lines “Extreme Unction.” The dying man says to the priest :

“Call, if thou canst, to those grey eyes  
Some faith from youth’s traditions wrung ;  
This fruitless husk which dustward dries  
Has been a heart once, has been young :  
On this bowed head the awful Past  
Once laid its consecrating hands ;  
The Future in its purpose vast  
Paused, waiting my supreme commands.

“But look ! whose shadows block the door ?  
Who are those two that stand aloof ?  
See ! on my hands this crimsoning gore  
Writes o’er again its crimson proof !  
The looked-for death-bed guests are met :—  
There my dead youth doth wring its hands,  
And there, with eyes that goad me yet,  
The ghost of my Ideal stands !”

Could there be anything sadder or more terrible? And yet we meet busy men and women every day, successful merchants and leaders of society, who could re-echo the same bitter cry, men and women who in the sordid rush for wealth and place and power have been disobedient to the heavenly vision, have falsified their dreams and sacrificed the ideals of their youth. Young men, hold fast to the ideal. Cherish the dream of a nobler life, a life of purity, love, and service. Strive to realise it more and more in your actual experience, and you will be doing not a little to bring about the fulfilment of that other dream—the dream of a fairer social state, a regenerated society, a redeemed humanity.



## WASTING THE HERITAGE

“There is nothing sadder in this world than the lost or wasted lives of men ; sadder to the eye which is able to discern them than poverty or death. Those who are the sufferers in this generally retain a life-long delusion about them, viz., that they are caused by anybody’s fault rather than their own.”

BENJAMIN JOWETT.

## CHAPTER V

### WASTING THE HERITAGE

#### *I.—Indolence*

IT is sometimes charged against the pulpit that its message lacks variety, that it harps to weariness upon the same worn strings, and preaches incessantly the same truths and doctrines. I am not disposed to defend the dull, uninteresting preacher. I hold no brief for the man who wearies his hearers. That is the unpardonable sin in a public speaker. But I wish to say that human nature in all ages is essentially the same, and that the vital needs of men vary very little with the process of the suns. They still need to be reminded of the eternal principles of righteousness. They still need to be warned against the same old sins. They still need to be comforted and cheered and saved by the same old evangel of God's love. Yet there should be no lack of interest or freshness even for the most *blasé*. Given a

modern setting, adapted to the modern mind and spirit, the old truths, the great fundamental truths of life and destiny, are as fresh and potent as ever.

In this chapter and the next we shall consider some of the things which waste and wreck the heritage of youth. A heritage may be wasted or lost through some defect of body, mind, or character, some infirmity or inefficiency physical, mental, or moral. Some men seem doomed to failure owing to some incurable defect of manner. You will generally find that these men are glaringly at their wrong occupation. They are misfits. I know a man who has thrown away chance after chance which in other hands would have led on to fortune. But then this man should never have been a draper. He should have been a journalist. As a rule, however, the defect is a moral one. Think of any known to you who have wasted their heritage, and you will find that moral weakness lay at the root of their failure. In our day we have seen many great reputations shattered, many brilliant careers prematurely ended, and in every case, whether musician, merchant, statesman, or general, the root cause was lack of moral strength. Splendid men most of them, physically and mentally virile, yet moral weaklings, slaves to passion, lacking in

self-control. The young man necessarily has the defects of his qualities. Zeal easily passes into fanaticism, trustfulness into simplicity, courage into rashness, energy into restlessness, confidence into conceit, enthusiasm into thoughtlessness and impatience. Restlessness and impatience are two of youth's abiding characteristics. Young men cannot learn too soon that

“Heaven is not reached at a single bound !  
But we build the ladder by which we rise  
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,  
And we mount to its summit, round by round.”

Young men cannot learn too soon the value of hard, steady, painstaking, persistent work, for *indolence* is one of the things which waste the heritage. A lady once assisted a tramp. “Thank you, lady,” said he gratefully, “you have saved me from that which my soul abhors.” “Indeed, what is that?” “Work.” The young man who abhors work, who works as little as possible and would work none at all if he could help it, will never be anything. No man ever yet achieved success in any walk of life who had not a genuine love of hard work and a stern sense of duty. Indolence is sometimes due to inherited infirmity of will, still further weakened by self-indulgence. I have known young men, and

not dullards either, who have lost situation after situation, because they could not or would not get up in the morning. I have known young men who have failed utterly in life whose early promise had raised the hopes of all their friends, and whose collapse was a surprise and a mystery. But the explanation was simply this, that gifted though they were in many ways, they were indolent and slothful. There is more hope of a stupid man who honestly loves his work and delights in it, than of a brilliant man who doesn't. In fact, brilliant men are always an uncertain quantity. Restless, erratic, and unstable, they seldom realise the hopes they excite. Oftener it is the man of ordinary ability with an extraordinary amount of dogged perseverance who rises to eminence in his profession or calling. It is the old story of the hare and the tortoise.

Few habits are more worth acquiring than the *habit of unflagging industry*. An idle brain, says the proverb, is the devil's workshop. In work lies safety and honour. The young "swell" who never did an honest day's work in his life, and fears to soil his lily-white hands, is as contemptible as the coarse, brutal, lazy scoundrel who marries a washerwoman and lives on her hard-won earnings. There is no room nowadays for the lazy man, the shirker of duty, no success for any save the

hearty, willing worker. This is universally true, as true of the clergyman and the artist, as it is of the weaver and the blacksmith. Two young men of my acquaintance commenced life in all respects equal as regards opportunity and ability. One of them has now reached the highest rung of the ladder, while the other is still at the foot. While the latter (who now earns £70 a year) was idling and loafing on the streets or in billiard saloons, the former (whose annual income runs into four figures) was hard at work, developing his faculties, employing his leisure time in reading and study, climbing upwards in the night, and generally qualifying himself for promotion. He thoroughly deserved the success which came.

Tell me how a young man employs his leisure hours, and I shall have no difficulty in forecasting his future. Very few, indeed, make the most of themselves and their advantages. Many a talent is lying uncultivated. "The man who deliberately allows the noblest part of him to lie waste, and spends in idleness and folly hours in which he might be growing more widely informed, more richly cultivated, is less than a man, and tends ever to sink downward in the scale of moral being."\*

\* *Christian Character*, by T. B. Kilpatrick.

*II.—Intemperance*

Intemperance lays waste many a goodly heritage. Messrs Rowntree and Sherwell's impressive and informing book on *The Temperance Problem and Social Reform*, with its mass of carefully gathered facts and figures, justly startled the nation. The drink problem is the mightiest problem we have to face in this twentieth century of Christ, and it is not teetotallers only who say so now. No doubt there has been progress. Two dangerous fallacies regarding alcohol have been exploded. Scientific experts have shown conclusively that there is no strength in alcohol, and that a glass of whisky only strengthens a man in the same way as a whip strengthens a horse. That is to say, it evokes strength, but does not create it. A second fallacy long held sway over young men and wrought infinite harm. It was thought to be a manly thing to drink. No one thinks so now.

We gladly note the improvement, especially amongst the upper classes, since the old hard-drinking days of, say Fox, when two men would consume at a sitting a gallon and a half of champagne or burgundy. George III. said to one of his favourites: "They tell me, Sir John, that you love a glass of wine."

"Those who have so informed your Majesty," was the reply, "have done me great injustice ; they should have said a bottle." A gentleman is rarely seen now the worse of liquor in a drawing-room, and "drunk as a lord" is no longer a proverb. Some years ago a gentleman dismissed his coachman for upsetting his carriage. "I had certainly drunk too much, sir," urged the poor man, "but I was not very drunk, and gentlemen, you know, sometimes get drunk."

"I don't say," replied his master, "that you were very drunk for a gentleman, but you were exceedingly drunk for a coachman."

What a light this sheds upon the drinking habits of that generation. A higher standard of life and conduct now prevails in the upper classes, and is bound ultimately to influence for good all the other sections of society. The workman is influenced by his foreman, the foreman by his employer. The policeman takes his cue from his lieutenant, and the lieutenant from his chief, so that a dissipated chief constable usually means a drunken force. So in society, each class is influenced consciously or unconsciously by the class immediately above it. At this moment drink is our national curse. Drunkenness is our national vice. In Great Britain there is a standing army of half a million drunkards.

Every year two hundred thousand lives are sacrificed at the shrine of the drink god. There is one drink seller for every thirty-five families. One of the ugliest portents of to-day is the alarming growth of bogus drinking clubs. Our cities are honey-combed with them, and the mischief they do is incalculable, especially amongst young men. Drastic legislation is urgently needed here. In the meantime it is very gratifying that drunkenness has at length been branded as a crime and the drunkard as a criminal, by the law of the land. Blame is thus laid at the right door. Moral responsibility is affirmed, and this should help to develop backbone in some rather invertebrate specimens of humanity, who have been only too glad of the opportunity which a misguided public opinion afforded of throwing the blame of their own folly on the publican.

We hear much about the revenue derived from the liquor traffic—thirty-six millions—but when we add up the profit and deduct the loss, we find there is a pecuniary loss to the nation of fifty millions. Pecuniary, but that is not the worst. Every organ and faculty of mind and body suffer from the use of alcohol. Irritability, shortness of memory, listlessness, stupidity, weakness of heart and brain, are some of the inevitable results of intemperance.

Drink injures health, dethrones the reason, destroys self-respect, hardens the heart and ruins the soul, for no drunkard, we are assured, shall inherit the kingdom of heaven.

The individual suffers morally and spiritually, as well mentally and physically. His judgment and will are weakened. He becomes untruthful, unreliable, false, and cruel. He sinks lower than the brute. To satisfy his fierce craving for drink, even for a single moment, love, honour, truth, and duty are all forgotten. His little children are they safe, when

“The vitriol madness flushes up in the ruffian’s head  
Till the filthy by-lane rings to the yell of the  
trampled wife.”

But the mischief does not end with the individual. *Society* suffers. A noble lord, who is certainly no extremist on this subject, has declared in a phrase which has become classic, that “if the State does not throttle the drink traffic, the drink traffic will throttle the State.”

Intemperance wrecks family life, shatters domestic happiness and peace, hinders prosperity, brings disgrace and want, and largely fills our prisons, asylums, and poorhouses. What a squandering of the heritage is this! How many social problems which now baffle

us, would solve themselves, if once this liquor problem were solved.

Yet we are confronted with this appalling fact that our national drink bill is still rising year by year. The consumption of alcohol is greater at this moment than ever before. In the year 1840 the expenditure per head upon alcoholic drinks was roughly £2, 18s., now it is £4. And that notwithstanding the increasing number of abstainers. It is estimated that of the one hundred and sixty-two millions spent on alcohol last year, at least two-thirds were spent by the working classes. One-sixth of the wage fund of this country goes for drink! No wonder that Messrs Rowntree and Sherwell declare that civilisation itself is menaced by this enormous and growing economic waste. Only the utterly selfish can regard this state of matters with indifference. Certainly no patriot, no lover of his kind, can do so. If we admit in any sense that we are our brother's keeper, we must do something. We dare not hold aloof, and sneer at tee-totallers. I appeal with confidence to the generous heart of youth. I do not say that every Christian must be a total abstainer. In the Bible you will find there are two courses laid down, two courses open to the Christian. There is, first of all, liberty to use moderately alcoholic liquors. The Son of Man came eat-

ing and drinking. He made wine at Cana. St Paul says: "Let each one be fully persuaded in his own mind. Let no man judge his brother. To his own master he standeth or falleth." In short, he claims Christian liberty for the Christian. But there is a second course—that of self-denial for the sake of others. St Paul says: "If by drinking wine I cause my brother to stumble, I shall drink no wine while the world stands." He claims Christian liberty to abstain. And will anyone deny that self-denial and self-sacrifice are of the very essence of Christianity, the very soul of the Incarnation? Here, then, I take my stand, not at Cana, but beside the cross. I do not judge you, my brother; you may be a more devout Christian than I am, but I ask you: Do you not think it worth while practising a little self-denial, giving up a pleasant and lawful gratification for the sake of some weaker brother? Your example will certainly strengthen some, and you will never regret it. Many years ago, when total abstinence was something of a novelty, at the close of a meeting many were signing the pledge. A tall grey-haired soldier pressed forward to the table, when his medical man placed his hand upon his shoulder, and said: "Stop, sir! you must not take the pledge. I know your constitution, and I know that if

you sign that pledge, you sign your death warrant."

The veteran, drawing himself up to his full height, replied bravely: "Doctor, I have often risked my life for king and country in the field, and now I will risk it for Christ." And he lived for many years to falsify the Doctor's prophecy.

With regard to pledge-signing, Ruskin's words are wise. "I would accept your promise with gratitude," he wrote to a young man, "if I thought it would be safe for you to make it. But I believe there is no means of preserving rectitude of conduct and nobleness of aim but the grace of God, obtained daily, almost hourly, through faith in His immediate presence. Short of this you will break your promises and be more discouraged than if you had made none. He that has once yielded thoroughly to God will yield to nothing but God." I earnestly say then to you, my young brother, give yourself to Christ in life-long consecration. That is the only infallible cure for intemperance I know, the only remedy that never fails. "If the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed." Christ will save you from this, as from all other sins. He will safeguard your heritage. In Christ, and Christ alone, lies hope, for the individual, for society, for our

nation, for the world. Sooner or later men come to see that there is no salvation in any other. If you who read this page have not yet made the great decision (and until you make that decision your life lacks completeness), I bring you now face to face with Christ who died for you, and implore you by His sacrifice and by the worth of your own immortal soul, to decide now, to give yourself to Him, to choose His service which means salvation, peace, joy, and life for evermore.

### *III.—Sensuality*

Writers and speakers often exhibit false delicacy in treating this admittedly difficult subject. I desire to treat it quite frankly. Safety, in my opinion, lies in knowledge, not in ignorance. Many a young man has been shorn of his strength by sensual indulgence, whose life might have been entirely different, had he been warned and armed in time. “Beware of the strange woman. Lust not after her beauty. Remove thy way far from her, for her house inclineth unto death. She has cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chamber of death.” In such graphic language

does Scripture describe that wretched being, the poor Magdalene of our city streets. But there is another side. She is only avenging her slaughtered virtue on the sex that ruined her. She is now an outcast, but once she was pure as the stainless snow. Did she not fold her little hands in evening prayer and say

“Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,  
Look upon a little child”?

Did not a fond mother clasp her proudly to her breast and bend over her lovingly as she lay in peaceful slumber? And see her now, with painted cheeks and brow of brass, glorying in her shame—hated, shunned, accursed, blasted for the sins of others.

But who put her there? She is an outcast from home and from decent society, lest she should pollute her pure-minded sisters, but where, I ask, is the miscreant, the human fiend, who brought her to this? Shall I say it? Fondled and idolised by that same decent society which excommunicates the partner of his sin. Oh the shame of it, and the injustice! It is time that Christian society treated the seducer as he ought to be treated, as a moral leper, unfit to mingle with clean and wholesome men and women. This social evil, says Miss Ellice Hopkins, is destroying “the sanctity of the family, the

purity of the home, the sacredness of marriage, the honour of women, the innocence of children, the chivalry of men, the very springs of the national life and health."

Sensuality is a prolific cause of suicide. Impurity leads to melancholy, melancholy to despair, and despair to suicide. It is not only the woman who grows weary of breath and plunges into the swift flowing river. When young men from home fall into the ways of sin, they become callous and indifferent to the claims of affection. The brief, infrequent letter home finally ceases altogether. A young man was found drowned in the Clyde, and the newspapers said he was unknown.

Within three days two hundred letters came from two hundred mothers asking for a description of the drowned youth. What a terrible suggestive fact is this, all too eloquent of wayward sons and aching hearts.

"Oh, where is my wandering boy to-night?  
The boy of my tenderest care,  
The boy that was once my joy and light,  
The child of my love and prayer."

There are many homes where these lines cannot be sung, but they are whispered by white lips in the silence of the night through a blinding mist of tears.

Samson, who fell a victim to his own licentiousness, is a type of the sensualist. Physically strong, but morally weak, woefully deficient in self-restraint, he stands for ever as a warning beacon to young men. Our sensual nature we share with the brutes. Our measure as a man is the height of our moral and spiritual nature. There is something unspeakably pathetic in the record of the strong man going out, as he was wont, to shake himself, and knowing not that his strength had departed.

It is ever thus. Quietly, imperceptibly, do we lose power in the ways of sin. The sinner is not conscious of his degradation. The eyes of his soul are put out by the Philistines of retribution. His spiritual vision is destroyed. In your own experience do you not know some one who is manifestly deteriorating, yet seems in his joviality to be unaware of the fact? A casual word from a child's pure lips may reveal to him like a lightning flash in the dark the awful gulf that yawns between him and innocence.

Esau, who sold his birthright for a momentary gratification, is also a type of the sensual man. As an animal he was superb. Highly developed on the physical side, he enjoyed life keenly. Pleasure he pursued at any cost. Sensual and sense-bound, a "profane person"

meaning unspiritual, he had no sense of spiritual things, no vision, no aspiration. Child of impulse, reckless of consequences, the present held him. The unseen was for him the non-existent. He had no grand aim or purpose to give unity, strength, moral force to his life. And the result was seen in his want of self-control. He showed this glaringly when he sold his birthright. He would have this fine supper which Jacob was cooking for himself, cost what it may. The fragrant, savoury odour had awakened desire. What was a birthright, with its future problematical advantages, compared with present enjoyment! A day came when his eyes were opened and he thought differently. Then he would fain have undone the mischief, but he couldn't. He wanted his birthright, but it was his no longer. He had sinned away his heritage. "He found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Let us not mistake the meaning of these words. They do not mean that he could find no forgiveness, that the door of mercy was shut against him. That is never the case. But they mean that he could find no way of undoing what he had done. He must reap as he had sown. And that is eternally true.

We may be truly sorry for our sin, we may sincerely repent and obtain forgiveness, but

the consequences of sin abide, perhaps in some ruined life, perhaps in our own ill health, perhaps in the enfeebled constitutions of our children. We do not sufficiently realise the eternal and far-reaching consequences of our sin.

Young men, I know you find it hard to live a perfectly pure life and keep yourself unspotted, unsoled. Immoral songs and poems are thrust into your hands, indecent pictures are held before your eyes, foul and pernicious books are lent you by men and even women who ought to be better employed than in sapping a young man's virtue. Even our newspapers are hardly safe reading, steeped as they so often are in the moral sewage of the divorce court. All day long in the warehouse or factory you are exposed to lewd conversation.

"To fight aloud is very brave,  
But gallanter, I know,  
Who charge within the bosom  
The cavalry of woe."

To meet the cavalry charge of temptation requires the courage of a hero. A young man lately gave me his experience, and I have no reason to suppose it was exceptional. From morning till night nothing but filth was talked in the large place of business where he

was employed. It haunted him like a horrible nightmare, and he wondered what he could do. He refused to laugh at the coarse jest, he preserved a grave face over the foul story. He remonstrated, reasoned, pleaded with them. It was a fight against fearful odds, but his own manly character ultimately gave him the victory. Had he been anything of a milksop, he would have failed. In the end he had the satisfaction of seeing the whole thing put down and a cleaner moral atmosphere substituted. I mention this instance for your encouragement. What one young man has done, others may do.

Repress the impure thought, the unclean imagination. Avoid the prurient fiction which unhappily is so much in vogue. You simply cannot afford to read it. Watch carefully the heart—the springs of conduct are there! Impurity was never yet manifested in the life which had not previously existed and been harboured in the heart. Finally, read carefully the following obligations of the White Cross Army :—

- 1st. To treat all women with respect, and protect them from wrong and degradation.
- 2nd. To endeavour to put down all indecent language and coarse jests.

- 3rd. To maintain the law of purity as equally binding upon men and women.
- 4th. To spread these principles among my companions.
- 5th. To use every means to keep myself pure.

## WASTING THE HERITAGE

“O glorious Youth, that once wast mine !  
O high Ideal ! all in vain  
Ye enter at this ruined shrine  
Whence Worship ne'er shall rise again ;  
The bat and owl inhabit here,  
The snake nests in the altar-stone,  
The sacred vessels moulder near,  
The image of the God is gone.”

J. RUSSELL LOWELL.

## CHAPTER VI

### WASTING THE HERITAGE

#### *I.—Gambling*

IN the previous chapter we have considered three things which wreck the heritage of youth—indolence, intemperance, and sensuality. We shall now consider other three hardly less baneful and destructive. The first is *gambling*. This vice is admittedly spreading throughout society with alarming rapidity. It is not confined to one class or one profession. It is rampant everywhere, in the West End as well as the East End, in offices, warehouses, and factories. It is a symptom of serious import. It shows that we are in the grasp of the ruthless spirit of reckless speculation which hastens to be rich at all hazards. This feverish spirit, this consuming passion for betting, is seen at work in the merchant on the Exchange, in the office-boy, and in the factory worker. Every horse race, every yacht race, every football

match affords scope for the gambling spirit. Mr Charles Booth, in the concluding volume of his great work,\* declares that the improvement in general intelligence due to the Education Act of 1870 has been largely devoted to the service of betting. During the race between the "Shamrock" and the "Reliance," I will never forget the eagerness and anxiety which I saw depicted on the faces of several men who were clustered around a lamp, scanning the latest edition of an evening paper. It was not the sailing qualities of the respective boats which interested them, it was not national pride or patriotism which excited them; it was, pitiful to say, the hope of winning, and the dread of losing, a few shillings on the race. And the same may be witnessed any evening when the result of a race or a match is published. Even the office-boy and the apprentice may be seen rushing out for an early copy of their favourite paper to learn the latest tips. To secure the same, many artisans in manufacturing towns and miners in colliery villages prepay telegrams from London. In railway trains we find men playing cards for money, and only the other day a young man was stripped of his all while making a short

\* *Life and Labour of the People of London*, vol. xvii.

voyage on an ocean steamer. Life itself is becoming a huge gamble.

Gambling is wrong and sinful and foolish for the following reasons :—It promotes gain without merit, as no work is done, no equivalent is given. It promotes gain through another's loss, and therefore is anti-social and anti-Christian. It is an outrage upon nature, and a direct violation of the two great principles which our Lord taught as the whole duty of life, viz., to love the Lord our God with all our heart and our neighbour as ourselves. It ruins the gambler financially or morally. It unsettles and unfits the mind for the ordinary duties of life, and vitiates the heart. It risks the welfare of family and friends. It destroys industry and thrift. It leads often to crime and suicide, as the records of our police courts too plainly show. Prison chaplains can tell many a harrowing tale of the frightful results of gambling and betting.

What is the remedy? Some advocate the suppression by law of the publication of betting odds and sporting tips in our newspapers. That would undoubtedly cut off one of the contributory causes. One great London daily has been brave enough to delete its betting column. But we must remember it is the gambling spirit we have

to deal with, and that can only be expelled by a spirit more powerful than itself. The thirst for excitement—we have to quench that in some legitimate way. The greed of gain—we have to transform that into something higher. Only when men are possessed and ruled by Christian ideals will they be effectually delivered from the gambling spirit. Meanwhile, those of us who occupy positions of influence and authority should discountenance the habit in every possible way. In day-school and Sunday-school our children should be warned against it, even as we warn them now against intemperance. We can show them that it is the degradation of all true sport, as well as the ruination of life. Young men who desire to make a success of their life, will do well to mark this foe of their heritage. I have said it is anti-Christian as well as anti-social. It is beside the mark to ask: Does Christ condemn it? For as Archdeacon Sinclair has truly said, it was not "in our Lord's plan to decide for us by name subjects so far off in the distant future as betting and gambling, any more than it was to speak of theatres, balls, or vote by ballot. What He did condemn was unfaithfulness to God's divine gift of talents and money, selfishness, covetousness, the maddening pursuit of excitement, the ruinous self-abandonment of

recklessness, the enervating disuse of manly effort, the senseless unreasonableness of folly ; and in condemning these vicious tendencies He condemned betting and gambling."

I will only remind you of two of Christ's sayings which bear directly upon the question. Did not Christ say "Beware of covetousness?" Did He not say "Love thy neighbour as thyself?" It is quite manifest that both of these injunctions are outraged by the gambler.

## *II.—Dishonesty*

From gambling to *dishonesty* is a very short step. The chaplain of Holloway Goal has clearly shown the close connection which exists between thieving and gambling. Sooner or later some sudden loss will reduce the gambler to straits and urge him to dishonesty. But all dishonest men are not gamblers. There are rogues who never made a bet in their life, sharpers who never risked a shilling on a horse. Open your newspaper almost any morning, and you read about some fraud or swindle. Move amongst your fellow-men and do business with them, and it will be strange if in a very short time you are not taken in by somebody. "The simple man," says the proverb,

"is the beggar's brother," and the world to-day is no place for the simple man. Is not the maxim of many successful business men: "Trust no man until you have proved him honest?" Yes, the swindler and the adventurer are abroad, and they live to prey upon society. They are the pirates of modern life. With them, however, I am not specially concerned at present, save to warn my readers against them. But what I am concerned about is the fact that many respectable young men, after a fair start, fall into dishonest ways. I knew one young man who wasted a fine heritage by a single act of dishonesty. He fell before his first great temptation. The office-boy who begins by pilfering postage stamps may end by forging his master's signature or embezzling thousands. Many employers have to use perforated stamps to prevent them from being stolen. Quite a ghastly story is told of the General Post Office concerning "invisible ink." A postman had long been suspected of stealing sheets of postage stamps, but the crime could not be brought home to him. One day he was found with a square foot or two of them in his possession, and confronted with his official superiors. He maintained, as on former occasions, that he had bought them for his own use. "What, these!" ex-

claimed his chief, at the same time passing a moist brush over one of the sheets, whereupon the blood-red words, "STOLEN FROM THE GENERAL POST OFFICE," started out like flame upon it. The effect was instantaneous and overwhelming. The thief made a full confession.

What are the causes of dishonesty? Sometimes it is extravagance, love of pleasure, love of display and show, and consequent living beyond their means. John Lawrie, the Arran murderer, furnishes a tragic illustration of this. Wayward, vain, dressy, extravagant, dishonest, criminal, he sowed his wild oats, and is now reaping his bitter harvest in Peterhead Prison. Too many young men are following hard in his footsteps. They may never steep their hands in murder, but they are as wayward, as dressy, as extravagant, as dishonest as he was. They are always in debt, always being dunned by their tailor for payment of their last suit of clothes.

Again, avarice is sometimes the cause of dishonesty, greed pure and simple, mammon worship, the lust of wealth, the desire to be quickly rich. The slow and sure road to wealth, steady work and attention to business, is scorned. Men want to make a fortune in a few months and it can't be done. They dream of gold at night and

speculate wildly during the day. Still the fortune does not come, and then, almost before they know it, they cross the border-line and enter upon a career of dishonesty, which in nine cases out of ten ends in disaster. Their moral nature has been undermined by avarice.

But the great root cause of dishonesty is a want of fixed religious principle. The man who lacks religious principle is like a straw blown about by every wind, but the man who has it, is like a rock immovable. The gusts of passion do not shake him from his integrity. He is true and honest in all his dealings with his fellow-men, because, in the first instance, he is true and honest with God. Ruskin proudly carved on his father's tombstone: "Here lies an honest merchant."

Young men, dare to be honest, although honesty should mean loss—financial loss, I mean, for it can never mean moral loss, loss in the highest, truest sense. And even the financial loss will only be temporary. Honesty never fails in the end to win respect and reward. The way of honesty is, after all, the shortest and surest road to success and wealth. A reputation for honesty is a splendid investment.

But dishonesty in financial matters is not the only dishonesty to be guarded against. There is dishonesty of work and of word.

Strive to be honest in your work—thorough, careful, conscientious; and honest in your word—truthful, straightforward, and reliable. There are men whose lives are a living lie. The classical example of duplicity is Absalom, and young men should note that vanity was the basis of his character. “In all Israel,” we read, “there was none so much praised as Absalom for his beauty, from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.” His consuming vanity, his love of display, his fine, handsome figure and beautiful hair, his craving for popularity —these were his ruin. Absalom was false to home, false to his father and mother, and that is about the worst thing you can say of any young man. Once he outrages the sanctities of home, he is fit for anything. Let no such man be trusted.

Probably Absalom was a little spoiled at home. David, I imagine, would be an indulgent father. A few years ago, great surprise was expressed that the sons of a well-known clergyman should have turned out so badly, but the secret emerged afterwards; when the father threatened, the fond mother caressed her boys, and often when they were strictly forbidden to go to a certain place of amusement, she would sit up to let them quietly in. And the result spelt ruin.

The father was too stern, the mother was too lax, and between them they ruined their sons. Unless there be unity of discipline in the home, there can be no training.

Years ago, when a student at Gilmorehill, I knew a young man who lived a life of deceit. His duplicity almost passed belief. He deceived his father and mother, his sisters and brothers. They thought him honest, open, trustworthy, a diligent student, while all the time he was an insincere, scheming idler, an unprincipled blackguard. They thought all the world of him, and he so successfully hoodwinked them that they indignantly denied the rumours which reached them of his wickedness, but at last it all came out, all was made manifest, such a life of hypocrisy and deceit, and he had to flee the country. Crooked, secretive, deceitful ways soon ensnare a man in a network of lies. He must lie to explain his actions and his whereabouts, why he was seen at a certain place at a certain hour, and why he failed to keep a certain engagement; and then other lies are necessary to hide the first, and so on he goes his downward way, the devil's track, the downgrade of dishonesty and duplicity, plunging and sinking deeper in deceit at every step, until his whole nature is honeycombed with falsehood and his life is a living, acted lie.

Yet he may be very plausible to meet, a nice, pleasant, handsome fellow, musically gifted and entertaining, an angel of light fitted to deceive the very elect. Surely it were better to be openly wicked than to smile and smile and be a villain. And further, the man who is false at home will be trebly false abroad. His deceit will enter into his business or profession. He is the very man to make money by the scant measure, the false weights, the secret commission, the lying advertisements, the spurious imitations, the forged brand-marks, the drugged drinks, and the shoddy goods. And woe unto those who have the misfortune to be ranked among his friends. He will borrow sums of money which he will never offer to repay. Lucky will they be if only their finances suffer through the duplicity of their false friend, lucky if they are not led by him into dishonest and vicious courses.

Let us scorn deceit, and love sincerity.  
Shun every false and crooked way.

“This above all—to thine own self be true ;  
And it must follow, as the night the day,  
Thou canst not then be false to any man.”

*III.—Unbelief*

I remarked above that the great root-cause of dishonesty is the want of fixed religious principle. It is the root-cause also, I believe, of all the other vices enumerated—indolence, intemperance, sensuality, and gambling. This serious lack of religious principle is due to the want of some definite belief, some definite religious experience. Norman Gale sings :

“Here in the country’s heart  
Where the grass is green  
Life is the same sweet life  
As it e’er hath been.

“Trust in a God still lives,  
And the bell at morn  
Floats with a thought of God  
O’er the rising corn.

“God comes down in the rain,  
And the crop grows tall,  
This is the country faith,  
And the best of all !”

Yes, it is the best of all, and pity it is no longer the city faith. “Unbelief,” says Chateaubriand in *Le Genu du Christianisme*, “is the principal cause of the decadence of taste and genius. When people believed nothing at Athens and Rome, talents dis-

appeared with the gods, and the muses gave up to barbarism those who had ceased to have faith in them." Thus faith is creative. It is also dynamic. Ages of faith are ages of action, as well as of literary productiveness and development. The decline of faith, therefore, is always ominous.

Unbelief is less blatant and less aggressive \* than it was in the days of Bradlaugh and Ingersoll, some twenty years ago. Our worst foe to-day is not active, militant scepticism, but passive indifference, a total want of interest in the things of the spirit. But a reaction is bound to come. There are signs that it is not far off, notably portents like Christian science and occultism, showing that man's spiritual nature, repressed during a time of criticism and negation, is reasserting itself and demanding satisfaction.

Robertson of Brighton once said : "There are two rocks in a man's life on which he must either anchor or split—God and Woman." He himself nearly split on the former. He escaped, because all through his theological and speculative difficulties he clung firmly to

\* Since the above was written, there has been a stir in the camp of the enemy. A militant note has been sounded in a certain socialist organ. It is welcome. Anything is better than indifference. A faith that cannot defend itself deserves to perish.

the "grand simple landmarks of morality." How different is the behaviour of some men we know. They break the moral law written on their own hearts, because, forsooth, they are not sure of the existence of God, or the divinity of Christ, or the immortality of the soul.

They make their scepticism a plea for an immoral life. They do not say with Robertson : "Whether God exists or not, whether we shall live hereafter or not, we will live pure, brave, and unselfish lives," but they say : "It is all uncertain, let us live for pleasure only, and gratify our every lust." Now on men who speak thus, and act thus, heaven's light and truth will never dawn. Christ said that if any man would do God's will, he would know the truth. Whosoever followeth Christ, that is, whosoever lives a pure, true, earnest, Christ-like life, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. Only to the pure, sincere heart is the Vision of God granted.

I have the deepest sympathy for all young men who have real difficulties, but I warn them against frivolous scepticism. Beware how you trifle with your Christian faith. An eminent scientist trifled with his belief in God until he lost it, and he became the victim of incurable despair. To a friend who was urging him to remember the love of God, he

replied: "Ah, I gave up my belief in God long ago, and I have had naught but a deepening despair ever since. The only rest I can look forward to is the grave—the only home that remains to me."

Was there ever a sadder story? Here was a noted man of science making the sorrowful and humiliating confession that his life had been a failure through loss of faith. Young men, trifle not with your beliefs, your sacred heritage of faith. Coquet not with doubt. But should any of you be under the cloud all unwillingly, let me say this to you—be pure, be earnest, be true, and as sure as you live (and that you do not question) the light you are seeking will break upon your path. Haeckel denies the existence of God, the soul, and life after death, and yet he admits that he understands the innermost character of nature just as little as Anaximander and Empedocles did, 2400 years ago; that the deeper he penetrates into matter and energy the more mysterious they become; that, in short, he does not know the "thing in itself" that lies behind all knowable phenomena. These are important admissions. The position is agnostic, and necessarily so. In his negations he travels beyond the province of science, which deals only with matter. Could there be a stronger argument for the need of

Revelation? One rejoices that the latest word of science, as uttered by Lord Kelvin, is so firm and clear: "Scientific thought is compelled to accept the idea of Creative Power."

Religion, says Prof. Max Müller, is a perception of the Infinite, leading a man to be good and do good. Religion, says Principal Caird, is the surrender of the finite will to the Infinite. Religion, says another, means the complete purification of human life, in all its offices, till the will of God is done on earth even as in heaven. Pure religion and undefiled, says St James, is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. But perhaps, the shortest and simplest definition of religion is this—"Religion is that which unites us to God." I think it is also the most comprehensive, for it includes all the others. It implies a perception of the Infinite, surrender of the finite will to the Infinite, being good and doing good. Religion is that which unites us to God, and Christianity is Christ's method of uniting us to God.

Religion is as necessary as food and education. Man is a three-fold being—made up of body, mind, and soul, and what shall we think of those who carefully train their physical frame and cultivate their mind and neglect

their soul? Every part ought to receive due attention—food for the body, education for the mind, and God for the soul. Our greatest wants are spiritual. The hunger and thirst of the spirit are more imperative and clamant than physical hunger and thirst. Our souls cry out for God, the living God. One day—sooner perhaps than we dream—all material things will shrivel up and vanish away at the final crash of doom, and only spiritual things will abide, and then you may find yourself in a spiritual world for which you have no sympathy or love. “In a few years,” says a modern preacher, “it will matter very little whether we laboured or rested, rejoiced or sorrowed; but it will matter everything whether our life on earth has lifted us to the life of heaven or no.”\*

Religion is needed as a safeguard against what St John calls worldliness and we call materialism. Now there is a worldliness which is Christian, and there is another—worldliness which is un-Christian. It is wrong to decry and deprecate the world we live in, and to go about wailing “Heaven is my home.” The earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof. It is God’s world and He has placed us in it, so here we must cheer-

\* W. J. Dawson.

fully remain until our work on earth is done. But while that is so, we must guard against that sordid selfish worldliness which eats away our spirituality and our true manhood. We must set our faces like a flint against materialism, against all that tends to weaken our love of God or our sense of the unseen verities. A cow's heaven is a clover field, and the materialist's heaven is a well-filled larder, but the spirit of man has always demanded something more than this. Man cannot live by bread alone. "At the bottom of every human soul, even of those that deny it, there lurks the insatiate hunger for eternity." \*

Religion gives unity and strength and force to a young man's life. It gives courage and calm amidst the fever and the fret, the hurry and the worry of modern life. It is the supreme necessity. It is the Elixir of Life.

Many are the answers given to the question : What is a Christian ? To be a Christian, says one, is to be a new creature in Christ Jesus. A second says : Every one who truly believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is a Christian, and to believe on Him is to lovingly trust Him. A third says : He is a Christian, who, believing the Holy Scriptures to be a Divine

\* G. Lowes Dickinson, in the *Hibbert Journal*, vol. i., p. 436.

Revelation, accepts the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ as the only solution of the problem of human salvation, and strives to walk in Christ's footsteps. A fourth says: A Christian is one who, in his thought and life, seeks the same highest good as Christ sought, and who finds his chief motive for seeking it in the example of Christ Himself. A fifth says: The true answer is found in Christ's own words: "Not every one that saith unto me 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven." He who desires to be a Christian has to ask only two questions: What is the will of God? and How am I to do it? Let a man try to do the will of God as Christ did it; let him try to be pure, loving, generous, sympathetic, self-sacrificing as Christ was; let him trust in the Father, follow duty, love righteousness and fight for it as Christ did, and he is a Christian.

Such are some of the answers given to this question of questions. Some of them emphasize *belief*, others emphasize *life*. Both are needed, but, more and more, men are insisting that the true Christian is he who lives a Christ-like life and makes Christ his master and authority in all things. A cynic once answered the question, What is a Christian?

as follows: A Christian is a man whose great aim in life is a selfish desire to save his own soul, who, in order to do that, goes regularly to church, and whose supreme hope is to get to heaven when he dies!

Prof. Henry Drummond wittily said that this definition reminded him of the reply Prof. Huxley received to his question, "What is a lobster?" "A lobster," said a student, "is a red fish which moves backwards." "A very good answer," said Huxley, "save for three things. First, a lobster is not a fish, second, it is not red, and third, it does not move backwards." If there is one thing that a Christian is not, it is precisely what this cynic declares he is. The one thing which Christianity tries to root out of man's nature is selfishness. The man whose great aim in life is a selfish desire to save his own soul is no Christian. He rather is the Christian who seeks to save others, and aims at sanctifying and purifying the lives of his fellow-men.

A day was when Christianity was almost synonymous with unreality and sanctimonious cant, and when young men justly despised it. That day is now gone by. Christianity is essentially manly, and has produced the highest type of manhood the world has ever seen. Grace and strength

are the grand characteristics of Christian manhood. All the beauty, sweetness, graceful loveliness and modest purity of the lily; all the sinewy strength and hardy endurance of the noble cedar, these combine to form a character of the highest and rarest kind. Grace and strength — graceful yet strong, gentle yet virile, fearless yet not rash, full of zeal and yet full of charity—is not this a character of divinest beauty, and well worth attaining? Only Christianity presents us with the ideal man, fully developed on all sides.

The influence of Christianity on young men has been very marked in our day. We have had splendid examples of Christian manhood, of manly sainthood. And while Christianity ennobles the character, it also emancipates and enfranchises the intellect. An impression still lingers in certain quarters that Christianity fetters the intellect. Never was there a greater mistake. Look at Christ's disciples. Did Christianity fetter them? Why, it transformed ignorant fishermen into authors, orators, organisers, and saviours of society.

Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Truth does not fetter. Truth sets free. We are freed from the *guilt and burden of sin*. The soul's cry is for purity

and peace, and in Christianity that cry is answered. We may not be able to explain the atonement—the theories are many and various, and the word itself is objectionable to many—but the *fact* remains. For us Christ lived, for us He died. That cross on Calvary meant the world's redemption. It was God Himself suffering for His children! That is the heart of the Gospel, the Gospel of the Grace of God, the infinite love of our Heavenly Father. Profound it is, deeper than the plummet can sound, higher than thought can soar. We may have our intellectual difficulties, we may ask ourselves questions that we cannot answer, but the greatest scholar and the deepest thinker, like the great Bengel, alike with the humblest, least educated believer, find a wondrous peace and rest for the soul in the assurance that in Him we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins. Christ delivers us from the guilt and burden of sin. That is a fact to which thousands can testify. No fact of science is more sure. In Christ we begin anew, make a clean, fresh start. Then we fight sin every day we live. We are not freed from conflict. That would simply weaken us, whereas we are called upon to be strong and quit ourselves like men.

We have *freedom of thought*. There is

perhaps no subject on which there is more misapprehension, and more misrepresentation, than on this subject of freedom of thought. There is an assumption in certain circles and in certain magazines—circles and magazines avowedly hostile to the Church and to Christianity—that only outside of the Church and outside of Christianity can freedom of thought be enjoyed, that he only is free who has renounced the Christian creed. Why, renouncing a creed or a belief is no proof either of freedom or sense. Freedom of thought is not gained by simply renouncing belief in revelation, any more than by renouncing belief in gravitation. A man may be as dogmatic in his scepticism as another man is in his belief. Haeckel is quite as dogmatic as Canon Gore. No man can live on negations. No mind can rest on negations, save for a little while. The everlasting Nay must give place eventually to the everlasting Yea. The difficulties of disbelief are greater than the difficulties of belief. Professed freethinkers often don't know what freedom of thought really means. While boasting of being emancipated, they are often the veriest slaves of prejudice and pride and superstition. "He is the freeman whom the truth makes free, and all are slaves besides." Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life

The truth as it is in Jesus sets free our noblest faculties. The ideal Christian is the true freethinker.

Further, we enjoy *freedom of life* as well as of thought. Here, too, there is much misrepresentation. The Christian life is often represented as a narrow, straitened, joyless kind of thing, stript of all pleasure. If such be the Christian life, then I do not know it. The life I know is full of joy, crammed full of the purest happiness and the truest freedom. The Christian life is life raised to its highest power. It is the freest life imaginable. There is no sense of restraint. Is the drunkard free? Is the sensualist free? Is the pleasure-seeker or gambler free? No, they are slaves every one, dragged at the chariot wheels of their own lusts, as prisoners of war in the days of the Roman Empire were dragged at the chariots of the victors. This notion of free living is a mighty delusion. It ruins thousands every year. It even keeps back our young men from the Lord's Table. They wish to enjoy life first, they say, and have their fling before they make a profession of religion. My dear young friends, do not allow the devil so to delude you. Do not allow him to make a mess of your life. Believe me, you will lose nothing that is worth having, no enjoyment

worthy of the name, by early giving yourself to God and proclaiming yourself on the Lord's side. But you may be saved from sin and sinful pleasures and evil companionships, saved from many an after regret and bitter heart pang. No innocent pleasure is forbidden to the Christian, no pure enjoyment. The world of nature and art is his to enjoy and richly enjoy. Music and song and the joys of friendship are his. Literature charms him, science unfolds its triumphs and shows him the wonderful works of God. Life is full and brimming with happiness, because duty is done and God is honoured. The Christian life is essentially a life of freedom. Most earnestly do I recommend it to the youth of our land. It is a sight to make the angels sing when young men hasten to do homage to Christ and to offer Him the dew of their youth, the strength of their manhood.

Such, then, are the foes—indolence, intemperance, sensuality, gambling, dishonesty, unbelief—which threaten to lay waste the rich heritage of youth. They can only be conquered by their opposites—diligence, temperance, purity, unselfishness, honesty, faith.



GUARDING THE HERITAGE

“It is a grand error to believe our character is formed for us rather than by us. It is formed by circumstances, but the desire to mould it in any way is one of these circumstances.”

J. S. MILL.

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“He alone is great  
Who by a life heroic conquers fate.”

SARAH KNOWLES BOLTON.

## CHAPTER VII

### GUARDING THE HERITAGE

#### I.

WE have seen that many things threaten to destroy the heritage of youth. If a young man would guard his heritage, he must, first of all, *learn to resist temptation*. Temptation, be it remembered, is not wholly an evil. Nor is it sinful. The Sinless One was tempted in all points even as we are. Temptation is universal. It is one of the first things we meet in the Bible, and it is one of the first things we meet in the world. All are tempted, and all are called to resist temptation. Young men who live in great cities are specially exposed to temptation. When a young man arrives in a city fresh from some quiet village or Highland glen, he is confronted with temptations to sin from which he was shielded at home by parental love and parental care. He is assailed by the hosts of wickedness. Then is the crisis of his spiritual

history. Drink, gambling, impurity—the trinity of temptation—lay siege to his soul.

Fast companions and associates slip immoral sheets into his unsuspecting hands, and pollute his mind and heart with lewd jests and foul stories. They urge him to share with them the aimless life of the street loafer. He sorely needs a good and wise friend, a trustworthy guide.

Perhaps he is reading this page. If so, I wish very affectionately, and in the spirit of brotherhood, to talk with him about the best means of resisting temptation. My brother, you have come to the city to earn an honest livelihood. Your home is away in the quiet green country; you feel lonely, a stranger in a strange land, stunned by the noise and bustle of this mighty city. You are in lodgings, and lodgings at the best are somewhat cheerless. They are not like home, your landlady is a decent woman, but she is not like "mother." You have formed no friendships yet. You hold shyly aloof, as country lads do, from the smart, sparkling, punning, gilded city youth who work alongside of you in the shop, or office, or warehouse. You have done well in holding aloof. You are safe so far, yet you are uneasy. Their language troubles you, and their veiled and vague hints about sinning are growing more open and undisguised.

They are quietly and with devilish cunning laying siege to your virtue. Soon will come the invitation to join them in these mysterious nightly revels of which they drop significant hints. Soon you will need to summon all your forces to resist an awful temptation. You are alarmed, and not without cause. You earnestly desire to be found impregnable, but how? How be enabled to stand fast in the evil day, when the shafts of the enemy rain thick upon you like hail? Let me try to answer.

Some will say, *Remember the divine command*, "Thou shalt not," and the divine warning, "Thou shalt surely die." "The wages of sin is death." But, my friend, from the earliest times this has not proved sufficient. It did not suffice in Eden, and it will not suffice with you. The devil's counter-statement, "Thou shalt not surely die," generally prevails.

Others will say, *Have an ideal* and live up to it. Keep ever before you some grand poetic ideal, like the stainless King Arthur, or the noble knight Sir Galahad. Very good in its way. I do not condemn this, I only say it is not sufficient. An ideal is good. It is inspiring to read beautiful poetry, to see beautiful pictures, and to listen to beautiful music. These are aids, valuable aids. They

help to keep up the tone, to maintain life at a high level. But they are not sufficient in the evil day. All history and experience prove this. There is a period in our lives when we young men become in turn every character we read about. The heroic appeals to us, for the heroic slumbers in every man ; and anything is good which nourishes our self-respect and self-reverence, which are indeed guardian angels to many, making them shudder and shrink from temptation instead of dallying with it. Cardinal Newman, who had rare insight into the human heart, truly says : “One great safeguard against sin is that we are shocked at it.”

Some recommend a personal *friendship* as a safeguard. And rightly, for few things are more helpful and strengthening than a pure and strong friendship. In your friend’s presence you could not sin ; you are strong to resist any assault. But, alas ! your friend cannot be always with you. Most likely in your hour of direst need he is far away. Will his memory help you ? Will the recollection of his strength and purity make you strong and pure ? Will the vision of your friend blast the very thought of impurity or dishonesty ? Perhaps, and perhaps not. I have heard of a shopkeeper who had in his little parlour behind the shop a portrait of his

friend and minister—none other than the saintly Robertson of Brighton—and, whenever he was tempted to trickery or meanness, he would hurry into the back room and look at the picture. "And then I felt that it was impossible for me to do it." With those pure eyes upon him he could not sin—surely a remarkable proof of the marvellous influence wielded by the great preacher. At the same time we must admit that this shopkeeper was no ordinary man. It is not every man upon whom a portrait would have such a powerfully restraining influence.

I shall now mention what I am persuaded will enable any young man most effectually to resist temptation. It is nothing less and nothing else than *affection for and devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ*. I speak from personal experience. I have also on my side the experience of eighteen centuries. This recipe never fails. Everyone is familiar with Chalmers' great phrase, somewhat worn by constant quotation, yet still standing for a great and imperishable truth, "the expulsive power of a new affection," and there is no affection so expulsive of sin from heart and life, so cleansing, so purifying, so redemptive as affection for Jesus Christ, the Almighty Saviour and the Unchanging Friend. In Christ we have the three things already con-

sidered—a command, an ideal, and a personal friendship. And we have more. We have what we need, and which we have seen these lack.

"I know what I am saying," says Mark Rutherford, "and can point at the times and places when I should have fallen if I had been able to rely for guidance upon nothing better than a commandment or a deduction. But the pure, calm, heroic image of Jesus confronted me, and I succeeded. I had no doubt as to what He would have done, and through Him I did not doubt what I ought to do."

Christ is able to succour them that are tempted. Commands, ideals, friends, are all external ; Christ is within us, controlling all our motives, affections, dispositions. Christ is within us the pledge of victory and the hope of glory. But I have said there must be devotion, and that means service. You will grow strong through serving. You must lead an active Christian life. You must use all the means of grace. You must join a church and regularly partake of the Holy Communion, which is the highest means of grace our Lord has instituted. Perhaps you have seen Sir Noel Paton's great picture, "In Die Malo," or Faith arming the Christian warrior. It is deeply significant that the young man

who is buckling on the armour has just partaken of the Lord's Supper—the sacred vessels are on the table in front of him—and his eyes, full of faith and courage, are looking away out into the darkness where the enemies of his soul are mustering. Sir Noel's later picture, "Beati Mundo Corde," represents this same youth returning victorious from the conflict. He has been assailed by every temptation, but has kept himself unspotted from the world, and the blessedness of the pure in heart is his. In the Tower of Constance, an old prison on the southern coast of France, they show you graven again and again on the stones of one of the dungeons the word "Resist." In that hideous place a woman, Marie Duran, was kept for forty years, and during all that time her employment was in graving that one word with a piece of iron. It is a word that needs to be engraven deep on every young man's heart. "Some people," says Professor Drummond, "sink under temptation; they are overborne and debased by it. Others by it become divine; they meet it and fight it and are made strong. Yet it is the same temptation that comes to both."

## II.

The young man who would guard his heritage, must endeavour to *make the most of his advantages and opportunities*. With regard to personal gifts of mind or body, they are best guarded by being used. Use or lose is a stern inexorable law alike in the physical, intellectual, and spiritual sphere. Omit your exercise and your muscles weaken. Cease to read and think and you grow unintelligent. Cease to pray and you lose the power of prayer. That is the Nemesis of neglect.

Cultivate your talents. Train your senses. How seldom, for example, is the eye trained to observe, as it might be, and to take delight in beautiful things? The blindness to natural beauty shown by most people is positively amazing.

No more fitting prayer could be offered for the majority of us than that which Elisha offered for the young man, "Lord, open his eyes that he may see." When a young man's eyes are opened on nature, on literature, and on life, he is in a fair way to make the most of his heritage.

*Literature* delivers its message in myriad voices and diverse tones. We have the voice of the poet, the historian, the essayist, the philosopher, the novelist, and the dramatist,

and no voice is without its signification. In a previous volume \* I have endeavoured to give some guidance with regard to reading. The problem of what to read, and what not to read, was never more difficult than now. One thing is clear, we must beware of the seductive magazine of illustrated snippets. Some people read nothing else, and the result is a distinct loss of capacity and a strong dislike of anything solid or informing. They have no patience with the great masters. They are afraid to tackle Carlyle or Browning. They speak respectfully of Ruskin and Tennyson, but they never read them. They cannot even settle down to read a novel by Scott, or Thackeray, or Dickens. They are addicted to magazines as other men are addicted to drink. It is dissipation in both cases.

These magazines, of course, have their place. They wile away an hour of tedium, weakness, or depression, but they are no more fit to be our intellectual food than sweetmeats are fit to be the food of the body.

I plead for some solid reading, some serious study. Each one must choose his own line, but he should read according to some definite plan, and he should always have on hand some book that demands thought and con-

\* *In Life's School.*

centration. Every such book mastered will mean for him increased mental power, and a better furnished mind. A brilliant modern author informed the present writer that he confined his reading almost entirely to science and poetry. No two things could well seem more antagonistic and incongruous, and perhaps they were selected for that very reason. There was wisdom in the choice. For science trains the mind in patient observation and exact thinking, while poetry cultivates the imagination and the finer emotional sensibilities. The one is a check on the other, and the extremes into which both are prone to run are avoided. Darwin regretted his inability to read poetry in his later years through his exclusive devotion to science, and many a poet would have been all the better of a course of scientific reading. We must distinguish, of course, between simply reading the fairy tales of science and doing original work as a scientist. The joy of discovery, of thinking God's thoughts after Him, must be very great. And the scientific mind need not become a mere "machine for grinding out general laws." Science indeed opens up realms of poetry of its own. "Whoever has not in youth collected plants and insects," says Herbert Spencer, "knows not half the halo of interest which lanes and

hedgerows can assume. Whoever has not sought for fossils has little idea of the poetical associations that surround the places where imbedded treasures were found. Whoever at the seaside has not had a microscope and aquarium, has yet to learn what the highest pleasures of the seaside are." \*

I should like to put in a plea for *poetry* and *history*. In poetry we get musical thought, inspiration, and impulse to noble living. The poet does not argue—he sees, and expresses what he sees in rhythmic and haunting phrase. The heart of things lies open to his piercing vision. Within the compass of twenty exquisite lines, you may have the quintessence of a book. When you grow weary of arguments and syllogisms, weary of having things proved, turn to the seer. He will enable you to *see* the truth. Often has the poet won back to faith the man whom the dogmatist had driven into unbelief. All questions in religion, says Emerson, finally come back to the poet.

Wordsworth, nature's high priest, unveiling to us the beauty of the world ; Tennyson, the poet mystic, sounding the deepest depths of love and life and destiny ; Browning, the robust optimist, scattering our traitor doubts ; Long-

\* *Education.*

fellow, charming the heart of youth ; Whittier, singing of manhood and of freedom ; Shakespeare the myriad-minded, whose specialty is everything, appealing to our nature on every side ; Lowell, pealing forth his clarion call to social service—each of them has made the world his debtor. What we owe to the poets we can only realise, and even then imperfectly, when we try to think of the world without them. A friend of mine makes a careful and minute study of one great poem every winter. One year he took the "Excursion," another year "Aurora Leigh," a third year "In Memoriam," and so on, working steadily through the masterpieces of English poetry. It is an excellent plan, although personally I prefer to study the complete works of one poet before passing to another. One well-known orator reads Shakespeare through annually, and his choice and beautiful diction shows that he profits eminently by the practice. The budding orator and the amateur essayist will find their style marvellously enriched by a study of the poets.

To pass from poetry to *history* is like passing from Kensington Gardens to the British Museum. Napoleon denounced history as a "fiction agreed upon." Walpole's sweeping dictum about the falseness of history is no doubt perfectly true about some histories,

notably Froude's, fascinating and impressive writer though he is. In his lecture on the "Science of History," he says: "It often seems to me as if history was like a child's box of letters, with which we can spell any word we please. We have only to pick out such letters as we want, arrange them as we like, and say nothing about those which do not suit our purpose." That was exactly how James Anthony Froude wrote history and biography, as all the world now knows. Discredited as a trustworthy historian, his works will continue to be read for the sake of their unsurpassed literary beauty. Napoleon and Walpole notwithstanding, young men will do well to devote some of their time to the study of history. For in history, as in a mirror, you see the rise and fall of empires. You mark the secret of their greatness, and the causes which brought about their decline and fall. Amidst all their poverty and struggle, pageantry and pride, you observe the action of unerring and inflexible laws, and knowing that what has been will be to the end of time, you can with tolerable certainty predict the fate of any nation or empire that persists in certain courses. Hence history makes men wise. It enlarges our knowledge of men and gives insight into human motive. It trains our judgment and expands the horizon of our

thought. It delivers from narrowness and provincialism, and so makes up in a way for the lack of foreign travel. The utility of history is further seen in the fact that it is related to, and sheds a flood of light upon, a vast variety of subjects. The best historian is the man whose general knowledge is encyclopædic, while he is an expert and a specialist in his own chosen department. That is why the great histories are so informing and illumining. As we read them we gather a mass of facts in geography, geology, philology, sociology, religion, jurisprudence, architecture, painting, literature, and antiquities of every kind.

The great histories, like the great biographies, may be counted upon the fingers of one hand. When you have named Gibbon and Motley, Hallam, Buckle, and Green, you have almost exhausted the list. It will be time enough to think of the many excellent historians in the second rank, when you have mastered these.

### III.

Be careful of *time*. Time is money, says the merchant. It is more. It is potential character, potential destiny. There is no part of our heritage more systematically

wasted than the part we label time. There is nothing we prize less than time in our youth, nothing we prize more in middle age. Swifter and swifter fly the hours as the years go by, and we look back regretfully on time misspent.

“O man ! while in thy early years  
How prodigal of time !  
Misspending all thy precious hours,  
Thy glorious youthful prime.”

Alfred the Great divided his day into three parts—eight hours to work, eight to study, eight for recreation and sleep, and see what he achieved. With grand and unique self-renunciation, he put aside the dream of conquest and personal glory, and devoted himself to the welfare of his people. He built the navy, organised the army, made laws, erected schools, restored churches, promoted intercourse with foreign countries, and encouraged literature, science, and art. Most of us have our working day fixed for us, and our problem is how to make the most of our margin of leisure. It is simply marvellous what can be made of “corners of time.” On these odd corners have been reared many a splendid reputation for scholarship, research, and inventive power. Seize the present moment, wrestle with it, and do not let it go until it bless you.

The right use of time will multiply your leisure. Many men are never at leisure because they are so prodigal of time. They need to be taught to use their leisure in a worthier fashion. What they lack, as some one has said, is not more time, but the faculty of using that which they have. On the use of leisure the destiny of the human race largely depends. Black indeed is the outlook of any nation whose youth spends its leisure in vice and frivolity.

Avoid those who squander your time and their own.

“Shun such as lounge through afternoons and eves,  
And on thy dial write, “Beware of thieves !”  
Felon of minutes, never taught to feel  
The worth of treasures which thy fingers steal,  
Pick my left pocket of its silver dime,  
But spare the right—it holds my golden time !”

The hours which belong to your employer use faithfully in his service. You may as well rob your master of money as of time. The hours which belong to yourself use zealously for your own self-improvement. Yet remember that time is not necessarily misspent because it is not spent in some fussy occupation. There is a time to sit still and think and label our thoughts. There is a time to muse and dream and saunter. We

are in such haste to be *doing*, as Robert Louis Stevenson has said, that we "forget to live." I believe in the strenuous life, but that life must draw its strength and inspiration from the quiet still hour of meditation and prayer. Amidst all our work and worry and warfare, we must strive to preserve the upward look of the soul. "Your garden is very small," said a visitor to a great, but poor philosopher. "Yes," was the reply, "but it is very high." What we need in our lives to-day is height, the soul's upward reach to God.

When Jesus was about to open the blind man's eyes, we are told He looked upward, and that look was characteristic of His whole life, equally in the great moments, such as Gethsemane and Calvary, and in the quieter, more uneventful, more restful—all through we constantly find this steadfast, heaven-directed look. Here was the secret of His strength, and His marvellous calm. If you have seen Munckacsy's "Christ before Pilate," you must have noticed that the most striking thing in it is the majestic calm of Christ.

There He stands in the centre of the Judgment Hall, in front of the perplexed Roman, guarded by fierce soldiers, and surrounded by a howling, brutal-looking Jewish mob—there He stands, in the grey morning light, weary, worn, and thin, exhausted by the midnight

agony of Gethsemane, yet indescribably calm, sweetly, ineffably, divinely calm! As you gaze on the picture, your eyes are drawn irresistibly to Christ. All else is forgotten, seems to fade away—the Roman judge, the soldiers, the Pharisees, the surging mob—all fade away, and you see Jesus only, your eyes are riveted upon the pale, calm, heroic, fearless face of the Saviour.

And that calm came, as I have said, from the upward look of His soul. My brothers, we need a calm like this, and we can get it only in the same way. Look not forward so often and so anxiously into the dim and unknown future. Look upward! Practise the presence of God. Keep the windows of your soul open towards heaven. In all great moments of your life, and in the ordinary humdrum, in your moments of weakness and depression, in your moments of strength and victory, at all times and in all places, whether working or resting, try to preserve this Christ-like attitude of soul. There may come to you hours of gloom when you feel solitary and deserted, when you shrink from unfolding your troubles even to your nearest and dearest—then, if not till then, you will realise the strength, and peace, and calm, which flow from the upward look.

## IV.

Be careful of *money*. All wealth is a trust, and whosoever squanders his money, even in the sacred name of charity, is a wasteful and unfaithful steward. There is much waste through unthoughtful, unwise, indiscriminate giving. London spends about five millions annually in unorganised charity. Glasgow one million, and Edinburgh half a million. Now, these large sums, properly administered, would meet and relieve every case of real necessity in each of these cities, and yet in them all there are clamant cases of want and destitution. What is wanted is the organisation and unification of all existing charities, so that there may be no overlapping and no waste. We have dozens of little Boards and Committees sitting administering funds and making grants, all oblivious of each other, ignoring each other, with the result that mendicity and mendacity receive golden encouragement, and imposters are manufactured by the score. Anything more wasteful, anything more idiotic, anything more unworthy of a practical people, could not be conceived.

Then there is the sentimental individual who objects to organised charity, and prefers

to give at his own sweet will, impulsively, spasmodically, and thoughtlessly, without carefully considering what the effect of his dole is likely to be on the recipient. Hold it as an axiom certain as anything in Euclid : these pitiful doles always do harm, never do any good. They are therefore wrong, and why should we do wrong simply to gratify a childish impulse to give something ? It is high time we put away childish things in the sphere of charity, and followed the noble example and carried out the principles of Chalmers, which after all these years still hold the field as the only true principles of charity. Then would the "fatal vice of ill-considered benevolence" be checked, the undeserving be exposed, and the deserving poor be adequately and generously assisted.

Money spent on education, on proper housing or dressing, on moderate social enjoyment is not wasted. Money spent on a church, a school, a library, or a work of art, is not wasted. A true work of art is not only a joy for ever, but an education, an inspiration, and is, therefore, worth more than gold. Money is not wasted which is spent in making a city, a home, or a church beautiful. We have our Lord's pronouncement on Mary's "splendid act of romantic wastefulness," which was so hateful to Judas. Her act was not to be

regarded as wasteful. It was a noble act of Christian feeling and devotion. It was the very prodigality of love striving to express itself symbolically in the precious ointment with which she sprinkled her Saviour's head. The question of material waste is quite beside the mark here. We are on a higher plane. You cannot measure an act like Mary's by so much hard cash. There is something of infinitely higher value in the sight of God than gold, and that is pure, disinterested love, and no money is ever wasted which succeeds in giving expression to a love like that. "All expenditure is justified," says Dean Stubbs, "which can be shown to be productive of such pure and noble feeling as shall add to the sum of the world's unselfish happiness."\*

Money is wasted when it is so used that it does not promote individual or social happiness or well-being. Any use of money that is anti-fraternal or anti-social is wrong, and therefore wasteful.

In a sense, of course, waste is relative. A working man considers it waste in any man to drink champagne at half-a-guinea, and smoke cigars at half-a-crown each; yet the man who does these things (if very rich) may spend a smaller proportion of his income on

\* *Christ and Economics.*

drink and tobacco than the man who earns only twenty-five shillings a week. One wasteful use of money is hoarding it, as the miser does. It is then wholly unproductive. It is obvious that vast sums of money are wasted on vice, on useless and senseless luxury, vain ostentation and vulgar display. It is undoubted that such ostentatious display of wealth provokes social discontent. Think of that latest transpontine absurdity, a dog banquet, when all the delicacies of the season were served up in a series of elaborate courses, eggs beaten up in milk and arrow-root, the finest essence of meat washed down with port wine and expensive liqueurs! People who exercise their misguided ingenuity on these things, must be modern Clara Vere de Veres, dying of *ennui*, cursed with nothing to do. Greater simplicity of living is urgently needed.

But wastefulness is not confined to the rich. A great deal of waste goes on amongst the working classes. I have known a man earn four pounds a week, and spend the half of it on drink. I have known another earn two pounds a week, and lose the half of it on a horse race. Unfortunately some leaders of the people foolishly preach the *gospel of unthrifit*, and condemn saving, as being likely to hinder the further increase of wages and

the attaining of still better social conditions. With many there is an utter and amazing recklessness with regard to the future; present enjoyment they must have, and when the evil day of adversity comes—sickness, disease, or slackness of work—they are on the rocks at once, and it is from them that the bitterest cries come against the harshness and injustice of modern civilisation.

To young men, who are naturally more inclined to be extravagant than thrifty, and who seldom show much wisdom or prudence in the management of money, I would say: Be very careful in money matters. Always live within your income, and keep clear of debt. "Let your imports exceed your exports and all will be well," was Johnson's wise advice to Boswell. Owe no man anything. Never purchase anything until you can really afford it. Carelessness in money matters is the beginning of sorrows. Many a young man drifts into a false position, and gets entangled in financial difficulties through the desire to keep up appearances beyond what his income warrants. Keep a strict account of your expenditure, yet don't be mean or miserly. Be as generous as you honestly can. The miser is as hateful as the spendthrift.

This chapter may be fittingly closed with Baron Rothschild's maxims for success in

life. They are arranged, you will observe, in alphabetical order.

Attend carefully to the details of your business.

Be prompt in all things.

Consider well, then decide positively.

Dare to do right ; fear to do wrong.

Endure trials patiently.

Fight life's battles bravely, manfully.

Go not into the society of the vicious.

Hold integrity sacred.

Injure not another's reputation or business.

Join hands only with the virtuous.

Keep your mind from evil thoughts.

Lie not for any consideration.

Make few acquaintances.

Never try to appear what you are not.

Observe good manners.

Pay your debts promptly.

Question not the veracity of a friend.

Respect the counsel of your parents.

Sacrifice money rather than principle.

Touch not, taste not, handle not intoxicating drinks.

Use your leisure time for improvement.

Xtend to every one a kindly salutation.

Yield not to discouragement.

Zealously labour for the right, and success is certain.

A POET ON THE HERITAGE

“Hearken unto a verser, who may chance  
Rhyme thee to good, and make a bait of pleasure,  
A verse may find him who a sermon flies,  
And turn delight into a sacrifice.”

GEORGE HERBERT.

## CHAPTER VIII

### A POET ON THE HERITAGE

WE have three sacred literary shrines in Scotland now—Abbotsford, Ecclefechan, and Alloway, but neither Scott nor Carlyle, great as they were, has gripped the heart of the nation as Burns has done. As a song-writer, he has admittedly no equal in the literature of the world. And (*pace* Mr Crosland) he is also great in other departments—in satire, in humour, in pathos, in description, in sentiment, and everything he wrote was the offspring of pure native genius.

He lived close to the heart of nature, and though certainly a well educated man, he learned most in the university of nature—the hills and glens and streams and plains of Caledonia. His first claim on our gratitude is that in an age of extreme literary artificiality, he brought us back to nature. He also exerted a purifying influence on our literature. We have only to read the songs in vogue

before his day to see how greatly he helped to purify and cleanse our literature; and although some coarseness, due to his age, still remains in his works, I have no hesitation in saying it is not half so harmful, or half so offensive as much that we find in the prurient and morbid fiction of our own day. It is with the sweet singer of Scotland as it was with the sweet singer of Israel. In the Psalms, David reveals himself without reserve with crystal clearness; so does Burns in his poems and songs: there you find his loves and hates, virtues and vices, sin and sorrow, glory and shame. He was not only the greatest and sweetest of song writers, but a glorious preacher of the Divine Fatherhood, of human brotherhood, the essential dignity of man, the honourableness of labour, the joy of love and the sacredness of home. A large-souled, brightly-gifted, true-hearted man, he has glorified with a deathless halo the homely virtues and homely scenes of Scottish life, sweetened for us the very air we breathe, and has made

“A clearer faith and manhood shine  
In the untutored heart.”

He voiced the inarticulate aspirations of humanity. He is the Laureate of man, of friendship, and of freedom. He has taught

us to love our brother-man and sister-woman, and to judge them gently. He gibbeted hypocrisy and gave the death blow to religious cant. He has taught us the folly of an atheist's laugh and that

“A correspondence fixed with heaven  
Is sure a noble anchor.”

He has taught us self-reverence, and that, whether clad in silks or hoddern grey,

“A man's a man for a' that.”

His epistle to a young friend, was written to Andrew Aiken, son of Robert Aiken, a writer in Ayr. It is a sermon in song, full of excellent advice to young men setting out in life. It helped me a good many years ago, and it may prove helpful to some who read this page. For it deals with the gravest problems, and the highest themes: success, pleasure, ambition, purity, friendship, religion, in short, the whole circle of duty to God and man and woman.

Burns cautions young men against facing the world and life's warfare with a light, unthinking heart. Prepare yourself. Brace yourself up for the conflict. You may fail and fall in the strife. You will need all your strength, skill, and fortitude, you will require

to strain every nerve if you would win success ; and even then, with the prizes of life in your grasp, you may experience a feeling of disappointment. For there is something higher still than mere success, and there is something worse than failure. There is a beautiful plea given for those who fail.

“ Yet they wha fa’ in fortune’s strife,  
Their fate we should na censure,  
For still the important end of life  
They equally may answer.”

A beautiful and a true thought ! To fight well is more essential than to win. What the world judges failure, is often success. It is in the struggle, the endeavour, that virtue lies. Do not harshly judge those who fail. It is not always the weakest that go to the wall in the scramble of modern competition, but frequently the truest and the best. There is a success which is dishonourable, and there is a failure that is noble. Success that is won at the price of your brother’s loss is not worth having. Do not climb to fortune or place over the crushed and bleeding body of your brother-man ! Do not despise a man who has honestly failed in life’s race, been defeated in life’s battle. The prizes of life are for the few, and they do not always go to the most worthy or most deserving. Do not despise a

man simply because he is poor. He might have been rich (who knows?) if his conscience had been less sensitive, and if he had not been so severely upright, so scrupulously honest. Some of the world's greatest men have been very poor.

Do not censure, then, those who fall in fortune's strife : they may answer the end of life. Through privation, they may become truly great, through suffering, they may grow strong. If only a noble character be produced, all is well—for that is the end and aim of life. Character is the one enduring thing in the universe, the goal of creation.

Yet success in life is by no means to be despised. Prosperity is well worth striving for. Riches place in a man's hand the power and opportunity of doing great good, and spreading happiness wherever he goes ; therefore those who are likely to regard wealth as a trust to be used for the welfare of humanity are the people who should have it. Young men should certainly cherish a worthy ambition and should aim at achieving success. That is Burns's advice :

“To catch Dame Fortune's golden smile,  
Assiduous wait upon her ;  
And gather gear by ev'ry wile  
That's justified by honour.”

Unflagging industry is the only road to true success. Realise the dignity of labour. For the loafer and idler there is no hope, and there should be no sympathy. What he deserves is a whip, or a few weeks on the tread-mill. Make up your mind to work hard,

“And gather gear by ev’ry wile  
That’s justified by honour.”

And why? Not to act the miser’s part and hoard up golden guineas to rust, not for the sake of vulgar display—No!

“Not for to hide it in a hedge,  
Not for a train attendant ;  
But for the glorious privilege  
Of being independent.”

Independence! How Burns prized it! Do we not catch an echo here of his matchless song, the charter of manhood, the marching music of humanity:

“The man o’ independent mind  
Is king o’ men for a’ that.”

Independent, yes, but not proud, or haughty, or exclusive, not independent of your brother’s respect or your friend’s love, not independent of God. Heine, who resembled Burns somewhat, asked when on his death-bed, that not a wreath but a sword be laid on his grave.

"For," he said, "I was a brave soldier in the war of the liberation of humanity." We may say the same of Burns. He helped to liberate humanity from superstition, bigotry, cruelty, religious intolerance, and social caste.

Burns lays great stress on *honour*. See that everything you do is "justified by honour." It is not necessary that you should use the silly phrase "'pon my honour" every five minutes, but it is necessary that you should be honourable in all your dealings. You have heard of the man who said he "hadn't much religion to speak of, he required it all to live by." Imitate him. Do not talk much about your honour, but live honourably. Shun the dishonourable as you would the plague — the dishonourable in act, in speech, in thought.

"The fear o' hell's a hangman's whip  
To haud the wretch in order ;  
But where ye feel your honour grip,  
Let that be aye your border."

The fear of hell is an unworthy motive for doing right. Some people have a wholesome dread of hell, but have no dread of sin! What folly! Does not the youngest child now know that it is sin, and sin alone, that lights up the baleful fires of hell. Do you think it is God, the loving Father in Heaven,

who kindles that quenchless fire, who creates that undying worm! Horrible thought! Horrible blasphemy! No, it is you, men and women, who do it, by your sin and wickedness. You can quench the fires of hell whenever you like, if only you would cease from sin and do the will of God. Oh, if men would only dread sin as much as they dread its consequences. Learn to do right, not from fear of hell, but because it is right, for honour's sake, uncaring consequences. The estimate of mankind in this epistle is a very fair and just one. He warns his young friend that he will find mankind an "unco squad," good, bad, and indifferent; he says they may cause him much grief and trouble, for

"Man's inhumanity to man  
Makes countless thousands mourn."

Yet Burns preaches no dismal misanthropy :

"I'll no say men are villains a',  
The real, hardened wicked  
Wha hae nae check but human law  
Are to a few restrickt'd :  
But, och, mankind are unco weak!"

Yes, that is so. A very short experience of human life will convince anyone that the majority of mankind are more weak than

deliberately and daringly wicked. Even amongst the criminal classes, I believe it is true that a large proportion of them have become what they now are through sheer weakness of will and defective moral training. They have never had a proper chance. Handicapped from the start, they have had to run life's race under fearful disadvantages. What ancestors some of them had! Of not a few of them it may be said in the words of Kingsley, that they were drunkards from the womb, harlots from the breast, damned before they were born! Let us, therefore, refrain from sitting in judgment upon them.

“What’s done, we partly may compute  
But know not what’s resisted.”

The next thing recommended to Andrew Aiken is the habit of keen *observation of men*.

“Conceal yoursel’, as well’s ye can  
Frae critical dissection ;  
But keek through every other man  
Wi’ sharpen’d, sly inspection !”

What good-natured shrewdness is here!  
What sagacity and knowledge of the world.  
No wonder Motherwell said that when Burns  
employed “his mind in giving rules for moral  
and prudential conduct, no man was a sounder

philosopher." Try to know men, to read character. Be frank, yet discreet. Be open, yet guarded. Many a young man has been ruined for want of discernment, ruined by forming an evil acquaintanceship. Burns himself, when a young man at Irvine, suffered from the friendship which he formed with Niven, who introduced him to many a scene of swaggering riot and roaring dissipation. That friendship exerted a very evil and disastrous influence on his after-life. Friendship is good, if it be with the worthy. What a pleasure it is to have one whom you can truly call a "bosom crony," one whose aims and sympathies and likings are identical with your own. A man can hardly have more than one friend like that. In a long life he will scarcely find more than one. Happy if he finds even one. If you have found one such, grapple him to your soul with hooks of steel. A good, wise, faithful friend is one of God's best gifts to man. If any young man reads this page who is feeling lonely and in need of friendship, let me say to him very earnestly—be wary and cautious in striking up a friendship with the unknown. My experience as a minister in a great city convinces me that a young man's moral success or moral failure depends very largely upon the first friendship he forms. If good, all

goes well ; if evil, all goes ill, and the end is a moral wreck, a ruined life, an early grave, and far away in some sweet secluded hamlet, or village, or Highland glen, a mother's broken heart and a father's bent form and prematurely whitened hairs ! A tragedy all too familiar, all too frequent !

Choose your friend wisely, then, and choose him frank, honourable, and above all, pure, chaste in word and act. Beware of *impurity*.

“ I waive the quantum o' the sin ;  
The hazard of concealing ;  
But, och, it hardens a' within,  
And petrifies the feeling.”

Nothing saps manhood and degrades the whole nature like sensuality. Purity is the hall-mark of Christian manliness. It is the golden crown of youth. Beware of sowing wild oats, for after the sowing there is the reaping, a harvest of woe and eternal shame. Young man, do thyself no harm, keep thyself pure, keep your record clean. Imitate Sir Galahad, the purest yet bravest knight of Arthur's Court. And if you would remain pure in act, you must remain pure in word and thought. Avoid persons and places which make unclean suggestions. Guard well the heart out of which are the issues of life. It is the citadel of the whole nature.

If you allow impure suggestions, and desires, and imaginations to hold high revel there, you are simply preparing for the outward act of impurity. Whatsoever things are pure, think on these things. Read books that have a pure and elevating influence, and associate only with those whose presence and conversation have a bracing effect upon you.

We have seen Burns advising his young friend to be diligent, honourable, prudent, brotherly, and pure; now we reach the highest point of his sermon—*be religious*. The friendship of man is good, but the friendship of God is better. He is the Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Nothing helps a man so much to be diligent and honourable and prudent, and brotherly and pure as faith in God. So Burns rises to the height of his great argument when he says:

“The great Creator to revere  
Must sure become the creature . . .  
An atheist laugh’s a poor exchange  
For Deity offended . . .  
A correspondence fix’d wi’ Heaven  
Is sure a noble anchor.”

While Burns gave the death-blow to religious cant, he exalted true religion and genuine piety in the eyes of all men. Religion, he emphatically says, is the anchor of the soul.

Without religion, man is at the mercy of every wind that blows across the ocean of life. In the closing verse he says :

“Adieu, dear, amiable youth !  
 Your heart can ne'er be wanting !  
 May prudence, fortitude, and truth  
 Erect your brow undaunting !  
 In ploughman phrase—‘God send you speed,’  
 Still daily to grow wiser,  
 And may you better reck the rede  
 Than ever did the adviser.”

“Than ever did the adviser”—alas, poor Burns! He was one of the “unco weak,” but unlike some men, he knew his failings and confessed them with a fulness and a fervour only equalled by the Psalmist himself. Read his own epitaph :

“The poor inhabitant below  
 Was quick to learn, and wise to know,  
 And keenly felt the friendly glow,  
 And softer flame,  
 But thoughtless follies laid him low  
 And stained his name.”

In his epistle to the Rev. John M'Math, he says :

“God knows, I'm no the thing I should be,  
 Nor am I even the thing I could be.”

Burns was no necessitarian or fatalist. He

believed in moral responsibility. He felt he could have made more of his life, more of his heritage, if he had exercised greater self-control. In his "Prayer in Prospect of Death," he says:

"I tremble to approach an angry God  
And justly smart beneath His sin-avenging rod.  
Fain would I say : 'Forgive my foul offence':  
Fain promise never more to disobey ;  
But should my Author health again dispense,  
Again I might desert fair virtue's way ;  
Again in folly's path might go astray,  
Again exalt the brute and sink the man."

Elsewhere, referring to this prayer, he says : "The grand end of human life is to cultivate an intercourse with that Being to whom we owe life, with every enjoyment that renders life delightful."

There are two extreme ways of viewing Burns as a man, apart from Burns as a poet. Some harshly judge him, and condemn him as a drunkard and a sensualist, and for many years this was the prevailing mode.

In our day, however, there has come a reaction, due to fuller knowledge and fuller charity. We know now that Burns was not the sot he was long represented to be. No drunkard could have written the glorious songs Burns wrote—one hundred and fifty of the finest songs in any language.

He drank, no doubt, and frequently to excess, but he was not a habitual drunkard. He had to work too hard for a living to permit of that. He was one of the most industrious of men. We say this, but we refuse to go the length some go in defending and excusing everything he did, on the dangerous plea that the genius is a law unto himself and is not to be judged like ordinary men. Burns himself would have scorned such a plea. He wished to be judged as a man, and judging him so, we must admit that he lacked self-control, and that thoughtless follies laid him low.

But when we have said this, we have said all we care to say. It is ungracious work criticising Robert Burns, and showing up his frailties. We prefer to read his own epitaph, his own stern judgment on himself, in reverent silence. His life was a constant struggle with privation, hardship, and misfortune, and there was always a glaring contrast, a tragic incongruity, between his poor circumstances and the glorious dreams in his soul.

In conclusion, it is pleasant to know that Andrew Aitken profited by the advice so shrewdly, so beautifully, so nobly given. He achieved success in life, and rose to distinction and influence.

Young men, will you follow his example?

What more can I say to you than Burns said,  
could anything wiser, or manlier, or more  
helpful be said than this—Be diligent, be  
honourable, be prudent, be brotherly, be pure,  
be religious?

ENRICHING THE HERITAGE

“I shall pass through the world but once, therefore,  
any good thing I may do, or any kindness I may show,  
let me do it now ; let me not neglect it, as I shall not  
pass this way again.”

THOMAS CARLYLE.

## CHAPTER IX

### ENRICHING THE HERITAGE

#### *The Personal Equation*

SOME time ago, a young man well known to me had the good fortune to inherit an excellent business which had been successfully built up by thirty years of honest and indefatigable toil, and by a rare combination of financial and mechanical skill. He entered upon possession with the resolute determination to greatly extend the business. He would not rest satisfied with merely maintaining and guarding what he had inherited. He was impressed with the idea that if he did not go forward, he would go back, if the business were not enlarged, it would shrink. With the enthusiasm and enterprise of youth he threw himself into the task. He enlarged his factory, purchased the newest machinery, and boldly extended his sphere of operations. His faith and courage were more than justified. The increased volume of business exceeded

his most sanguine expectations. He thus enriched his heritage. And that is what every young man should strive to do with the heritage of youth. It is not sufficient merely to guard it: he should seek to enrich it. Seeds in a mummy case are guarded well enough, but there is no increase. Our heritage is a vineyard to be cultivated. The Parable of the Talents is emphatically a young man's parable, and it tells how to enrich the heritage. "Occupy till I come." Your talent may be safe enough in the ground, but you must not hide it idly there, else the doom of the wicked and slothful servant will be yours. Put out your talent to use and so make the most of it. Add to the original stock. All your gifts of head, hand, and heart, of time and knowledge and opportunity, of strength and aspiration, all that constitutes your peculiar heritage, must be so used that they shall be ennobled and enriched, not wasted or weakened, during the years of your earthly probation. Isaac affords us a good instance of prizing the past and adding to it. He re-dug, we are told, the wells of his father Abraham, which the Philistines had stopped, and called them, with filial devotion, after the names by which his father had called them. He was loyal to his dead father. A less loyal man would have chosen

new names for self-glorification and future fame. Not so the self-effacing Isaac. The names his father had given would do still, and so he named the re-opened wells as before.

But he did more than simply re-dig his father's wells. He dug some of his own, and so enriched the heritage from the past. Every age must dig its own wells. Every man indeed must dig his own wells. We cannot in these days live exactly as our ancestors lived, or think exactly as our forefathers thought. While we prize and guard the old wells, we shall also open new ones, for there are sources of strength and inspiration and refreshment available for us which was not available to earlier generations.

Youth's best heritage is itself. Our first duty, I repeat, is self-enrichment, the *enrichment of personality*. Philosophy assures us that the *telos*, or end of everything, is to reach its highest expression, that is to realise itself. That is our end also. Everything that helps a young man to realise himself should be duly taken advantage of, everything that develops the best and represses the worst, everything, in short, that truly educates. I have already mentioned some helpful things, such as exercise in the physical sphere, reading, observation, and reflection in the intellectual

sphere, love, friendship, and religion in the moral and spiritual sphere. The one word culture might cover them all. It is through culture in its widest sense, culture as Walter Pater would define it, the harmonious development of all the parts of human nature, in just proportion to each other, that we realise ourselves. Everything which enriches our personal heritage ultimately enriches the common heritage. Our life passes into, and becomes part of, the heritage of humanity through our children, our influence, our work. Society's best asset is good men, good citizens.

I emphasize the value of cherishing worthy ideals. The handwriting is on the wall when a man or a nation ceases to respond to the ideal. It has been truly said that you may gauge the moral force or greatness of a people by the dignity and permanence of their ideal, and the abnegation wherewith they pursue it. The greatness and moral force of the individual may be measured in the same way. A man's ideal fixes his character. Follow the ideal then.

“ Set up a mark of everlasting light  
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,  
To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam.”

The heritage is enriched by the reception and assimilation of new ideas, and by the cultiva-

tion of high and manly qualities. A lady once said, and I believe she spoke for her sex, that what woman admire most in men is manliness, and what they dislike most is meanness, affectation, and effeminacy. Dr John Pulsford, in a striking meditation, points out that many men quit themselves like tradesmen, many like grown-up children, many like parrots, many like religious machines, many like Englishmen or Scotchmen or Americans, but few, very few, quit themselves like *men*. “To be *men* is both your first duty and your first privilege. It would comfort your guardian angels, it would satisfy God, to see you *men*. Were the single purpose and aim of your soul to become *men*, you would be conscious of the strong sympathy of all heaven, you would inherit sovereign authority from the Brotherhood of Christ, you would have confidence towards God.” \* What are the marks of a man? They are courage, sincerity, reverence, self-control, gentleness, strength, unselfishness, modesty, self-respect, generosity. Every one will give the first place to *courage*, although every one may not attach the same meaning to the word. The whole world admires physical courage, the fearlessness that leaps into the deadly breach and, scorning danger,

\* *Quiet Hours.*

laughs in the face of death. And it is worthy of admiration. Shame befall us when we shall cease to be thrilled by a brave deed on the battle-field or the raging sea or in the fire-enwrapped dwelling. But there is a higher courage still than this. It is moral courage, courage to speak the truth at all times and do the right and bear the cross. "There is nothing in the world," says Seneca, "so much admired as a man who knows how to bear unhappiness with courage." I suppose that is why the suffering man of Uz has won the homage of mankind. It requires a hero to meet with steadfast heart some overwhelming disaster. "Roll up the map of Europe," said the broken-hearted Pitt when he heard the fatal news of Austerlitz, "it will not be wanted these ten years." He was about right, but could he have foreseen Waterloo and the downfall of Napoleon, his courage would have revived. There are many stern battles fought and won every day, of which the world hears nothing and sees nothing. Glorious victories over temptation and sin are daily recorded in the books of heaven, victories that enrich the heritage and go to the making of manhood.

Closely allied to moral courage is *sincerity*. The sincere man is not necessarily right in every case. St Paul was as sincere in error

as he was in the truth. But you always know where to find him, you can depend upon his genuineness and veracity. He is never a hypocrite, that most odious of creatures. Friend or foe, you respect him. There is no false or unsound bit in his whole nature. We say of the sincere man that he is true as steel, good as gold, reliable as granite, safe as the Bank of England. Sincerity is the dominant note in every noble character, in every impressive personality. Without sincerity, no moral or spiritual attainment is possible.

*Reverence* is also one of the marks of a man. The soul that is a stranger to the feeling of awe and veneration is scarcely human. Petty souls are sometimes strangely deficient in reverence, but great souls are profoundly reverent. We should cherish Goethe's three reverences—reverence for what is above us, for what is beneath us, and for what is around us, on an equality with us, or in the words of the Westminster divines, for our "superiors, inferiors, or equals." Reverence for God and holy things—the Lord's Day, the Lord's House, the Lord's Word—around which the noblest traditions of our country and our own sweetest memories cling, will ever, I trust, be a mark of the British race. Reverence for the starry heavens above us and the moral law within us and for human life with its

mingled mystery and tragedy, will surely be an attribute of the thoughtful mind to the end of time.

*Self-control* was long ago eulogised by the wisest of men, and every student of human nature has re-echoed his eulogy. Inhibition is the physiological synonym for self-control. "We can demonstrate," says Dr T. S. Clouston, President of the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh, "that there are 'inhibitory centres' in the brain—that is, there exist groups of cells whose function is not to act themselves, but to control the actions of other groups of cells, to stimulate them to exertion, or to hold them back and to steady them when working. These are the 'governors' and brakes that regulate the pace of the brain cells and that prevent the machine running away and getting itself smashed or worn out too soon. If we could provide every man and woman with a good controlling apparatus, most of the cataclysms in their lives would be avoided, while happiness and longevity would be greatly increased. Inhibition exercised in eating and drinking, in work and play, control exercised over imagination, passion, and inclination would mean, when translated into moral terms, temperance, duty, consideration for others, chastity, law abidingness, and gentleness."

We have seen how the lack of self-control mars the heritage. The possession of it enriches the heritage. Self-mastery, the subjection of the flesh to the spirit, of the lower desires to the higher, is an undoubted mark of a man. The glories of war pale before the triumphs of the spirit. Greater is he that ruleth himself than he that sacketh a city. How terrific, and well-nigh hopeless, has often been this bloodless conflict! The pages of literature bear witness to the fearful struggle that often takes place before the wild horses of desire are brought under the rein of the masterful will. Every young man knows something of this struggle, and most of them at some time or another have cried out with St Paul, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Well for them if they also found his answer to the question, and like him won deliverance through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. How perfect was Christ's self-command when provoked by wicked men, and when He hung upon the cross, offering up His life for the very men who reviled Him. To have all power at your command, and yet calmly to decline to use it against your deadly foes, this surely is the perfection of self-control. And He who manifested it in a human life is able and willing to impart

something of it to us and reinforce our weak vacillating wills. The strongest will needs reinforcement in the evil day when the enemy breaks in upon us like a flood. We admire the Oxford student who, when a glass of wine was thrown in his face during a discussion, calmly said: "That is a digression, now for the argument."

*Gentleness* and *strength* are qualities we seldom associate together in thought, but they are sometimes found united in one person, and then we have a character of rare beauty, of supreme excellence, and one distinctively Christian—all the strength of Stoicism at its best, with a tender grace added which Stoicism never knew. We know how brusque and even boorish our strong man can be, how feckless and characterless our young man of the amiable type often is. Gentleness is apt to pass into weakness, and strength into brutality. When blended, they correct and supplement each other. Paganism was the cult of the strong. Christianity gave due place to the gentler virtues, and altered the world's conception of a man. Henceforth he was no longer a bully or a tyrant, but gentle and considerate, even while he was the strongest of the strong and the bravest of the brave. Be pitiful, be courteous, quit you like men, be strong. The Iron Duke was gentle as a woman. Infinite tenderness was

masked by that stern inflexible exterior.  
Out of the strong came forth sweetness.

"His life was gentle ; and the elements  
So mixed in him, that nature might stand up  
And say to all the world, 'This was a man !'"

With gentleness we usually associate *unselfishness*, which is thoughtful consideration for others expressed in acts of kindness. And the test of a man's unselfishness is the common day. The calls may seem trivial, but they reveal character. The way in which they are met proclaim the man. I sometimes think that, to be in a crowd of men and women all eager to catch a glimpse of royalty or secure the best seats at some popular entertainment, is the severest test of character and the greatest strain upon a man's Christianity I know. Then the selfishness or unselfishness of a man's nature comes out, the barbarism or the chivalry. Then the best and the worst of human nature are seen. You see the selfish brute elbowing the delicate woman out of her place, and trampling upon all who are weaker than himself. You see nature's gentleman considerately yielding his position of vantage to one not so able to fight for his or her own hand in the surging, striving crowd, and instinctively you touch your hat to one of the blood-royal of

humanity. In the home, young men have a fine field for the exercise of unselfishness. By little deeds of kindness, little acts of thoughtfulness and self-denial, by staying in of an evening beside mother, or by taking sister out, he can vastly increase the sum of happiness in the home. There is no more pitiful or contemptible creature on this planet, and he exists, I fear, in considerable numbers, than the young man who thinks of nobody but himself, and cares for nothing but his own ease and pleasure. One can excuse a little selfishness in the aged, whose joys are few and fewer and whose day is nearly done; but generous youth and gripping selfishness are an ill-matched pair.

*Modesty* in the young is as beautiful, and should be as natural, as unselfishness. It springs from a lowly estimate of one's own worth. It is the Christian grace of humility. Its opposites are conceit, forwardness, brag, pompous pretentiousness. "I have read the Book of Life," said a conceited youth to his grandfather. "No," answered the old man, "the contents are not on the cover." An acute criticism of that self-sufficient superficiality which distinguishes the fool! This young fellow looked upon life as a magazine of illustrated snippets. He had glanced at the cover and the table of contents, and

thought he knew life. Ah me! he hadn't mastered the alphabet. What days and nights of terror were ahead of him when he should dip more deeply into the blood-drenched pages of that awful volume.

"Self-conceit and self-consciousness," says Dr A. T. Schofield, "are forms of egotism, and are merely potential virtues spoiled through exaggeration. The virtue they distort is self-respect. These two particular characteristics are common faults with young men when passing through the first of their three phases. The first phase is the wearing of magnifying glasses, when everything, including the value of themselves, is magnified. The next is the wearing of diminishing glasses, when everything is played out and worthless, and *nil admirari* is the attitude; and the third is when glasses are put aside, and for the first time, life and all things are seen as they are."\*

Young men, let me remind you of two of earth's greatest and wisest, kings both of them in their own sphere, who each said that he was but a child in understanding and knowledge. "With the lowly is wisdom." "The reward of humility is the fear of the Lord, riches, honour, and life."

\* *The Springs of Character.*

But while modesty or humility is a noble quality in a man, let us beware of false humility, undue self-depreciation. For ten to one it is insincere.

“The devil did grin, for his darling sin  
Is pride that apes humility.”

True self-respect can never be wanting in a strong and symmetrical character. If we venerate the handiwork of God at all, we must venerate man, the acknowledged crown of creation. Therefore we must venerate ourselves. Self-respect is the basis of all aspiration and of all attainment. If man were utterly desppicable, totally depraved, as the old theologians used to say, there would be nothing in him to which we could appeal, no point of contact with the divine. He would be incapable of salvation. Indeed, there would be nothing in him worth saving. But man is a child of God. He has an immortal nature cast in the image of God. And even while yet unregenerate and unspiritual, he is not far from the Kingdom of God. Christ always took a kindly and hopeful view of human nature, and fixed His eyes on the glorious possibilities latent in every soul. Christ never despaired of any, and why should we?

I have included *generosity* amongst the marks of a man; meaning by generosity not

merely a disposition to give liberally, but magnanimity, greatness of mind, nobleness of soul. It is opposed to that meanness which women so much dislike in men, a meanness that manifests itself not only in stinginess in money matters, but in contemptible and little-minded acts and ways. Instinctively we all steer clear of the "mean fellow," and as instinctively we draw to the "generous fellow." To be accurate, magnanimity is not so much a single quality, like those we have already considered, as a mental and moral characteristic which manifests itself in these very qualities—courage, sincerity, reverence, self-control, gentleness, strength, unselfishness, modesty, and self-respect. All these are found in the high-minded, great-souled man. And the young man who develops these qualities in himself enriches at once his own heritage and the heritage of humanity. Every man who improves himself improves the race, and helps to form the character of future generations. This is service rendered of an indirect, unintentional, and unconscious kind. In the next and closing chapter of this book, I shall consider some forms of direct and intentional service, for which no financial remuneration is given or expected, but which young men may render out of love to God and their fellow-men.



ENRICHING THE HERITAGE

“ If any little word of mine  
    May make a life the brighter,  
If any little song of mine  
    May make a heart the lighter,  
God help me speak the little word,  
    And take my bit of singing,  
And drop it in some lonely vale,  
    To set the echoes ringing !

“ If any little love of mine  
    May make a life the sweeter,  
If any little love of mine  
    May make a friend’s the fleeter,  
If any lift of mine may ease  
    The burden of another,  
God give me love, and care, and strength,  
    To help my toiling brother ! ”

ANON.

## CHAPTER X

### ENRICHING THE HERITAGE

#### *Social Service*

YOUTH'S magnificent equipment of strength, hope, and vision, means service, battle, duty. True Kingship, according to Plato, is essentially service. The Prince of Wales has for his motto the significant and beautiful words, *Ich Dien*, I serve. Our Lord Jesus Christ, when He walked this earth, said, "I am among you as he that serveth"; and ever since these words were uttered, service has been the criterion of a useful life, the measure of true greatness. In our day, the idea of social service has grown more prominent and more vivid than ever. It is only within recent years that we seem to have fully grasped the meaning of Christ's teaching concerning social service. The extreme individualism which reigned for some three hundred years has received a check, and men have begun to

realise that the motto, "Every man for himself," is neither wise, nor worthy, nor Christian. A new sense of duty has awaked amongst us—duty to others, duty to our brethren, duty to our day and generation.

"Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." In this divine paradox, Christ reversed the common idea of greatness, which was being waited on, and served, ministered unto instead of ministering.

This utterance was drawn from Christ by a quarrel for precedence in the Kingdom of God, excited by Salome's preposterous ambition for the honour of her two sons. She spoke in ignorance, and, therefore, Christ quietly but firmly rebuked her, saying, "Ye know not what ye ask." Salome was silenced, but the disciples were not. They were moved with indignation against James and John. They continued hotly to discuss this question of precedence until Christ interposed, saying, "Ye know that the rulers of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." This was a

new idea to the disciples. It calmed their excitement and settled their quarrel. There was to be no precedence save in ministry, no greatness save in service.

Christ's idea has permeated society, and is at this moment ruling the world. Service is now universally the test of greatness. A man's greatness is measured by his power of service, by his ability to aid and bless the human race. Is it not so? We see it in every department of thought and action, in science, art, commerce, and politics. There is no room nowadays on this earth for the man who is not able to render some sort of service to his kind. To every man his work, to every man his service. Long ago, it used to be said that man's first duty was to know himself, but now, as Carlyle, the Apostle of the Gospel of Work, has so nobly inculcated, a man's first duty is to find out what he can work at, and then do it with all his might.

*Greatness is measured by service.* How is the greatness of a statesman measured? By his power of service, by his faculty for discerning the wants of his fellow-men and legislating accordingly. The greatness of the philanthropist is measured by the Christ-like service he renders to suffering humanity, by pouring the oil and wine of genuine sympathy and practical helpfulness into the gaping

wounds of the down-trodden and the sorrow-stricken. The greatness of an inventor is measured by the incalculable service his invention renders, by the labour, and time, and money it saves, by the speed with which it carries us round the world or enables us to converse with far-distant friends. How is the greatness of all great merchants, manufacturers, and workers generally measured? By the service which their skill, dexterity, thoroughness, and promptness confer upon all of us. The greatness of the philosopher and scientist is measured by the original thought, hard study, and painstaking research, which dispel superstition and spread enlightened views of Nature and her laws. And the same is true of the artist, and poet, and musician. They are the gifted sons of genius, God's human singing-birds. They fill our lives with music and our homes with beauty. They give expression to our unutterable feelings, and to our profoundest, saddest thoughts, which "often lie too deep for tears." And this is a true service, is it not? It is the measure of their greatness. The more they serve humanity, the greater they are. And what shall we say of the physician and the preacher? The one has relieved the sufferings of many a diseased body; the other has spoken peace to many a troubled soul.

Their greatness, too, lies in their power of service.

We see, then, that everywhere and in everything, men now estimate greatness by service. We have some reason to rejoice in this marvellous triumph of Christ's idea ; and may we not truthfully say that the triumph was due in no slight degree to the fact that Christ's own life was an illustration of the great truths which He taught. "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." Christ's life stands alone and unique in its power of service. The noblest human life can only approximate to His, and the highest tribute of praise we can bestow upon any man is to say that he is Christ-like. True serviceableness is Christ-likeness, and, therefore, true greatness is Christ-likeness. After eighteen centuries of trial, Jesus Christ is still the standard of true greatness. And to that greatness we are individually called to aspire as the goal of our Christian life. On that gleaming goal which shines ahead of us, we fix our eyes, sorrowfully wondering at the lesser aims of some of our fellows, and we strive and pray till we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

Such is our goal, but the way which leads

to it is humble ; it is the path of lowly service. While reading the above examples of greatness attained through service, some of you, my readers, may perhaps have thought that greatness can never be yours because your service is so lowly and insignificant. But there you are mistaken. The lowliest service may be the greatest.

What are we doing to check the awful wreck and ruin wrought by intemperance, impurity, and gambling? What are we doing for young lads and girls exposed to the insidious temptations of the street, and music hall, and dancing saloon? What are we doing in the way of providing wholesome amusements and pleasant social evenings for those whose lives sadly need brightening and uplifting? What are we doing for the sick, the aged, and the poor, and those who have no helper? What efforts are we making to Christianise our home heathen?

It is an easy thing to give a subscription, easier far than to give personal service, to climb dingy stairs and visit the dwellings of the poor, and bring the gracious influences of Christianity into many a wretched home, and so lift the inmates a little nearer to the light, the love, the peace of heaven.

Such work means self-denial and self-sacrifice, but young men should not shrink from

these things. It is hard work, and it is not showy work ; but it is a Christ-like work, and therefore glorious. Young men should offer themselves (as many of them do offer themselves) for service in connection with the numerous and varied branches of Christian effort and social endeavour now found in every active church, such as Sunday School, Band of Hope, Boys' Brigade, Young Men's Guild, and District Visitation.

But over and above all these, they might undertake *some special and distinctive work*. In the year 1885, there was started in the west end of London a "Workers' League," the objects of which were, to "introduce those desiring work to fields of usefulness best suited to their special gifts; to reinforce existing agencies with workers; and to form a workers' exchange." This is a capital idea. In every city and town there is need for a workers' exchange ; some centre to which application could be made for efficient and trained workers, and where training also could be given to the inexperienced. Existing agencies need reinforcing. Many are languishing for want of workers. On the other hand, there are numbers of young men willing to undertake some work, if they only knew exactly what to do. The Christian Church has never utilised, as she

might, the vast latent energies of her young men.

I shall indicate one or two lines of work and influence. Young men might conduct Clubs or *Social Institutes* for growing lads. If there be one class of the community more than another that young men should understand, and be able to reach, it is surely this class—young lads on the threshold of manhood, passing through the most perilous and formative period of their lives. They can enter into their thoughts, feelings, and aspirations. Having so lately trodden the same dangerous path, they can understand the glamour and the mystery and the restlessness of youth. They can sympathise with their love of freedom, their boisterous moods, which are a safety-valve for their overflowing energy, their hero-worship, and their hatred and unreality. They can get hold of them, if any one can. Suppose, in some poor district, you succeed in gathering fifty or sixty lads into a bright warm room once every week or oftener. You have magazines and curios for them to look at, you have games like draughts and bagatelle, you have music and singing, and recitation and conversation. Is not this a work worth doing? You have made friends with these lads. You have rescued them from the street corner, and the public-house; in all

probability, you will save them physically, intellectually, and spiritually.

Again, you might conduct *social evenings* for men and women of the poorest classes. Secure a hall, well-heated and brightly lit, in some needy district, for the Saturday evenings. Put a genial, earnest, large-hearted man in the chair. Have an excellent programme of vocal and instrumental music, and in the middle a brief, bright, brotherly address on the evils of drunkenness or gambling, or on the duty of thrift, cleanliness, self-control, and self-reverence. At the close an opportunity of signing the pledge may be given. Occasionally have a lime-light lecture. In my own parish several young men took up work like this. The meetings were well-attended and greatly enjoyed. They brought a ray of sunshine into not a few dreary human lives, and one poor hard-working woman said to me, "I just weary for Saturday night." Make people happy, and you will help to make them good. Occupy their minds, and you will diminish the power of temptation. You not merely entertain, you elevate, refine, and safeguard.

Some young men may prefer to assist in what they consider is a more distinctively religious service. If so, they will have no difficulty in finding scope for their energies.

Any minister will give them a field, or what Chalmers called a "home-walk." The work is hard, but it is not too hard to those whose hearts are full of love to Christ and love to man. A well-known clergyman in Edinburgh one day met a little girl, almost a child, carrying a very heavy baby. It was a task far beyond her strength, yet she struggled along bravely and cheerfully. The minister looked at her, and said, "Is that child not far too heavy for you?" "Oh no," she answered brightly, "for he's ma' brither." How love lightens labour! When once we realise that every poor, ignorant, besotted man is our brother for whom Christ died, and that he may be redeemed and sanctified; we shall not stop to consider what efforts will be necessary to save him.

"He who will not give  
Some portion of his ease, his blood, his wealth,  
For others' good, is a poor frozen churl."

A young man may do a good deal for his *companions*. "We are at all times," says Bishop Westcott, "unconsciously educating others by our own example. Our standard of duty in the discharge of business and in the use of leisure necessarily influence the desires and the actions of those who look to us for guidance." I have had many friends and companions, good and bad, wise and other-

wise, and I know how they have influenced me. One, my first friend, the constant friend of many years, at the most impressionable period of life did much for me. He increased my fondness for books, he strengthened my love of virtue, he stimulated my intellectual life. Another companion, of robust manliness, put some iron into my blood, interested me in muscular Christianity, and helped to develop the physical side of my nature. A third first awakened doubt within me concerning the eternal virtues of our holy religion, and then, by his larger faith, slew the doubt he had raised. A fourth evoked the enthusiasm of humanity, a deathless interest in social questions bearing upon the well-being of society.

More of a personal nature I might say, but this will suffice. It shows what a young man can do for his companions, or, which is quite the same, what companions can do for a young man. The forming of a companionship has often proved the making or the marring of a life. Robert Burns, as we have seen, when a lad of eighteen, was injured irretrievably by the friendship he formed with William Niven. Never again did his mind regain its tone nor his heart its purity. Scripture records many a striking example of good and evil influence. Philip led Nathanael to Christ; the gay,

seductive Absalom led two hundred young men to ruin. They went, we are told, in their simplicity ; they knew not anything. Oh, the simplicity of young men ! And how often is their simplicity due, as in this instance, to ignorance—ignorance of men and of the world.

“ *In Memoriam*,” one of the greatest poems ever written, was the fruit of a friendship between two young men. Arthur Hallam may or may not have been all that Tennyson fondly believed him to be, but what matter ? Tennyson’s sublime faith in his friend produced a poem which has inspired and comforted thousands of sorrowing hearts, and has won for the poet himself immortal fame.

A young man may help to mould the characters of his companions. “ He who goes with the lame,” says the Latin proverb, “ will begin to limp.” “ He who herds with the wolves,” says the Spanish, “ will learn to howl.” A young man of high character cannot associate with companions without doing them good. His influence, however quiet and indirect, is bound to tell. But he should not rest satisfied with indirect influence. He should aim at doing them good, deliberately, earnestly, and perseveringly. Damon, with noble self-forgetfulness, was willing to

die for his friend Pythias. Young men of to-day can best imitate him by living for their companions.

They should strive to be an inspiration to noble living, a source of strength and refreshment and ever-brightening hope. George Eliot speaks of those who "bind us over to rectitude and purity by their pure belief about us, and our sins become the worst kind of sacrilege, which tears down the invisible altar of trust." Another says, that a true friend "comes as our rebuker, to explain our failures and shame us from our lowness; as our purifier, our uplifter, our ideal, whose life to us is a constant challenge in our heart: 'Friend, come up higher, higher along with me; that you and I may be those truest true lovers who are nearest to God when nearest to each other.'"

What nobler function could any young man desire than this?

Young men should strive to safeguard their companions from the besetting sins of our day. They should endeavour to bring them within the reach of good influences and keep them in the right path. Two illustrations occur to me. The first is that of Paley, the great moralist. When a student at Cambridge, he was idle and frivolous, until one of his fellow-students took courage to remon-

strate with him. Going to his bedside one morning, he said to him earnestly, "Paley, I have not been able to sleep for thinking about you. I have been thinking what a fool you are! I have the means of dissipation, and could afford to be idle; you are poor, and cannot afford it. I could do nothing, probably, even if I were to try; you are capable of doing anything. I have lain awake all night thinking about your folly, and I have now come solemnly to warn you. Indeed, if you persist in your indolence to go on in this way, I must renounce your society altogether." The words took instant effect. From that moment Paley was a new man.

The second illustration is a tale of self-devotion, which Professor Henry Drummond told more than once in his own charming way. I can only summarise it here. A medical student attending Edinburgh University had gone to the bad. His people had given him up. He was drinking himself to death. For months he had not read a book. Another medical student resolved to make one strong effort to save him. He paid his bills and took him to his lodgings, where he could watch over him day and night. It was no easy task. Again and again the drink craving returned, but in the end he triumphed. He

had saved a man—a man who is now known as the “Christian Doctor.” Work like this of course demands sacrifice, and every young man who would do something for his companions must be prepared to make sacrifices, to give, as Joanna Baillie says, “some portion of his ease, his blood, his wealth, for others’ good.”

There is one thing that any young man may do, namely this, endeavour always to keep up the tone of conversation, to keep it at a high level. It has a tendency to sink when young men get together. Here the presence of a young man of known Christian character has an immediate effect. There are men in whose presence no one could swear or tell a foul story. Great is the might of character. Tennyson says of Hallam :

“On thee the loyal-hearted hung,  
The proud was half-disarm’d of pride,  
Nor cared the serpent at thy side  
To flicker with his double tongue.

“The stern were mild when thou wert by,  
The flippant put himself to school  
And heard thee, and the brazen fool  
Was soften’d, and he knew not why.”

Young men would do a good deal for their companions (I do not mean the inner circle

we call friends), if they would sternly dis-countenance lewd conversation, frivolous jesting, and profane swearing.

Dr J. R. Miller truly says, "The power of life over life is something almost startling. There have been single looks of an eye which have changed a destiny. Out of every one of us continually virtue goes, either to heal, to bless, to bear marks of beauty; or to wound, to hurt, to poison, to stain other lives." Finally, if young men would influence their companions powerfully for good, they must see to this—that they themselves strenuously live the Christ-life.

"*Think* truly, and thy thought  
Shall the world's famine feed.  
*Speak* truly, and thy word  
Shall be a fruitful seed.  
*Live* truly, and thy life shall be  
A great and noble creed!"

Further, young men should take a *living interest in social questions*. They cannot afford to be indifferent to the social movements of our time. They should study the social experiments of the past and present, and deduce from them guidance for the future. Many of these experiments have been costly and futile. Some of them have been most fruitful. For example, Dr

Chalmers' solution of the problem of pauperism is of entrancing and perennial interest, and deserves more than a passing notice here.

The names of two great Scotsmen will be for ever associated with social science. The one wrote an epoch-making book ; the other wrought an epoch-making work. Adam Smith, the founder of political economy, was holding his own in London with Johnson and Garrick and Reynolds when Thomas Chalmers, the founder of the modern science of charity, was born at Anstruther, in the year 1780. Smith laid down the principles which would ensure the wealth of nations ; Chalmers laid down the principles which would secure individual and social well-being. He anticipated many of our latest discoveries, and we are deeply indebted to him both for ideas and methods. He well deserves, therefore, a foremost place among social pioneers.

The genius of Chalmers was many-sided, and he was *facile princeps* in many fields. But with Chalmers the orator, the theologian, the professor, the ecclesiastic, we are not concerned at present. We have only to do with him as a social pioneer.

When he went to St John's Parish, Glasgow, in 1819, it was deliberately to work a great and novel social experiment. This parish, then the poorest in Glasgow, contained

a population of ten thousand people, many of whom had no church connection. He found himself confronted with a trinity of evil—ignorance, vice, and poverty—and he attacked each of them in turn. He was a firm believer in the parochial or territorial system, and was convinced that only on these lines could social evils be successfully combated. He divided the parish into twenty-five small districts under separate management. He opened two day schools and over fifty Sunday schools for the instruction of the children. He realised (as we are realising anew) that the problem of child-life is primary and fundamental. He instituted special evening services for the parishioners only, and brought hundreds into the Church who had long been alienated from it. He laboured in every way to promote "social recovery," to elevate and purify the lives of the people. He believed in the power of religion, education, and Christian friendship to develop and evoke character, self-reliance, self-control, and self-respect.

But he reserved his best energies for his attack on poverty, or, to be more accurate, *pauperism*. It was the extinction of pauperism that he aimed at. "The dearest object of my earthly existence," he said, "is the elevation of the common people." He was profoundly interested in the well-being of the

poor, held strong opinions with regard to modes of help, and was the pioneer of the Elberfeld and Charity Organisation methods. He drew a vital distinction between the Charity of Law and the Charity of Love. He disliked compulsory assessments for the maintenance of the poor, and preferred the Scotch system of voluntary church-door collections. He offered to maintain all the poor in St John's Parish in this way, and his offer was accepted by the authorities. The experiment was more than successful. In four years he reduced the pauper expenditure from £1400 to £280 per annum. He aimed at intensive rather than extensive work, the employment of trained workers in small areas, concentration upon manageable districts rather than superficialising over a whole city.

"What we most desiderate in an agent of charity," he wrote, "is to have one with the taste and the inclinations of a thorough localist—one who rejoices in a home-walk. A single obscure street, with its few divergent lanes, may form the length and the breadth of his enterprise." And so he revived the diaconate, and entrusted each of his deacons with the care of about fifty families. Excellent men they seem to have been, intelligent and carefully selected, and they loyally carried out the instructions of their chief. Each one

acquired a thorough knowledge of his "home-walk," the circumstances, habits, and character of every person in it. For eighteen years the new system remained in force, and it was admittedly a triumphant success. Not only was there a marked decrease in pauperism, but the poor were better cared for there than in any other parish in the city.

A fundamental and favourite doctrine of Chalmers' was the sufficiency of the poor, that in themselves they had resources sufficient to meet all their needs. In one respect, at least, things have changed for the worse since his day. The spirit of independence has been lamentably weakened. How much of this is due to the operation of the poor-law I am not prepared to say, but I know that the old horror of being "on the parish" is gone. Decent working people, when they come to want, feel no shame now at being paupers, so long as being "on the parish" simply means receiving out-relief. They have still the old horror of the "house." The tendency in our day is more and more to look to the State for everything, and the writings of Chalmers form a splendid corrective to this tendency. He perhaps unduly depreciates the value of legislation, but the emphasis he lays upon character and individual effort is entirely wholesome, and greatly needed to-day.

He proclaimed to the world once for all, in a striking object-lesson, the principles of true charity. Chalmers was a preacher, a theologian, a philosopher ; but we venture to think that it is as a social teacher, that he will be known to future generations. Even already his theological and philosophical works lie unread on our shelves, his preaching is a memory ; but his sociological writings are the very bread and nutriment of all social workers.

Young men should familiarise themselves with the lives of men like Chalmers, and Maurice, and Kingsley, and Toynbee. They will find that much of our work and effort in the way of progress and social reform, is simply a clearing away of accumulated evil, a doing over again of work that had been undone, a redigging and reopening of wells that had been wickedly filled up. What was Josiah's reformation but this? What was Nehemiah's? What was Luther's? Was it not a reopening of the wells of salvation, a clearing out of rubbish which had been accumulating for centuries, the errors and superstitions and foulnesses of the Church of Rome? What was the Evangelical revival in the eighteenth century but this? John Wesley found England in a deplorable condition. You can imagine how depraved the people were, when Wesley wished he could

convert them to honest heathen. He was sworn at, stoned, covered with mud, and seized by a press-gang as a soldier, but escaped. His deliverances from death were amazing and providential. Again and again men came to kill him, but remained to pray. Hands raised to strike, were arrested in mid-air. The wickedness of the land was almost beyond belief; the drunkenness, the profanity, the immorality, the political corruption, the open, flagrant, heaven-defying iniquity. "Such an ocean of sordid nothingness, shams and scandalous hypocrisies," says Carlyle, "never weltered in the world before." A new reformation was needed. The wells had again got choked. Whitefield and Wesley and the Evangelical revival brought England back again to God, and inaugurated an era of progress and reform. Every genuine revival of religion is followed by social reform achievements. In the eighteenth century our prisons and asylums were in a shocking condition. No language can describe their foulness and horror, men and women being herded together like cattle. Then arose, in the wake of the spiritual revival, John Howard and Elizabeth Fry, and these horrors were swept away. The era of sanitation, decency, and social sympathy began which has culminated in the high level we know.

We see, then, that every few centuries a new reformation is needed, and the whole nation advances to a higher moral and spiritual level. In the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries we had such reformations, and I believe we shall see another in this twentieth century. There are ominous signs that such a reformation is needed. Religious indifference, devotion to pleasure on the part of a large section of society, drunkenness, the degradation of the lowest stratum, the general slackening of authority in the home, the disobedience and forwardness of children—all these things indicate that we are ready for a new reformation. And I have no doubt that it will come. We who are professed followers of Christ and members of the Christian Church must realise our responsibility in this matter. We must be in earnest and do our part. For the reformation must begin, as always before, with a genuine spiritual and ethical revival. The Church must lead, and the social reforms will follow.

We shall dig again the old wells of family life, family religion, reverence, faith, obedience. The slackening of authority is largely due to the dawning of new ideals of liberty, a consciousness of new powers, and men don't know how to use them yet. When the nation begins with renewed earnestness to

remember God and live for God, then a great social advance will be made, then a solution will be found for those grave problems which confront us, and in presence of which we now helplessly wring our hands.

One of the most hopeful signs of the times is the way in which the *Church is addressing herself to the solution of social problems*. Witness the formation of the various Christian leagues and unions for social service in England, Ireland, and America, the Christian Social Union and the Scottish Christian Social Union, all distinctively Church movements. The last-named union originated in the conviction that the Church had never adequately realised her social mission, and consequently had never striven to fulfil it. She had left the solution of social problems too much in the hands of Secularists and Socialists, who had not been slow to make capital out of her neglect. For her own sake, as well as for the sake of humanity, it was felt she ought to face them, and strive to find a solution for them. It seemed to the promoters that a union truly national, unsectarian, with no political or theological bias, a union for social service of the wisest and best men and women in all the Churches, would be a good thing. It would furnish the Church with a social ideal, and equip her for social

service, for carrying out the redemptive work of Christ in Society. And so the Scottish Christian Social Union was formed, and is daily growing in numbers and usefulness. It affirms the social mission of the Church. It is educating public opinion. It is initiating and guiding various forms of social service. Young men should throw themselves into this movement. There are still some who deny that the Church has any social mission, and maintain that her function and mission are spiritual only. I once heard a minister say: "We are not here to make the world better, we are here only to pass through it on our way to glory." Few would venture to say that now. It is a travesty of Christianity, an utter misrepresentation of the religion of Jesus. The Gospel of the Kingdom aims at redeeming the environment as well as the man, the habitations as well as the habits. "Such conditions must be created," says Mr Amory H. Bradford, "as will redeem the human life-stream itself. One fact, at least, can scarcely be questioned any longer: reform must be along positive rather than negative lines. The intemperate must be given something better than liquor; the pauper something that will stimulate, without exhausting, his feeble vitality; the criminal some nobler object for his ambition and his energies than

that which he is now seeking."\* In the near future every church will have its shelter, labour home, inebriate home, orphanage, prison gate and police court mission, employment bureau, and farm colony. My profound conviction is that the special glory of this new century will be its social reform achievements, and I long to see our young men in the fore-front of the battle. The elder race of reformers who have been fighting in the wilderness for forty years will not have the joy of entering the promised land—they will only catch a glimpse of it from the sunlit summit they have won. But the youth of to-day will enter in and reap its golden harvests. Their joy will be all the greater if they have the consciousness that they have helped to win it, helped to enrich not only their own heritage, but the common heritage of man.

\* *Heredity and Christian Problems.*

THE END



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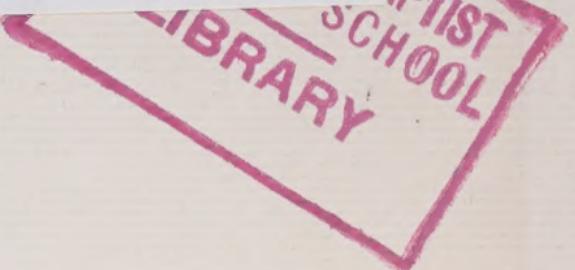
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